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THE DEBATES.

THE numerous, or innumerable, devotees of despotism on the Continent delight to point out the incompatibility of the English Constitution with the effective transaction of business. It is admitted that a Parliamentary system may foster a certain rude independence, gratifying to the vanity of nations accustomed to be free, and not unattractive to the historical speculator; but Paris and Berlin, Vienna and St. Petersburg, chuckle simultaneously over the incapacity of a popular assembly to conduct great international affairs. There are pedants and sycophants in England who not unwillingly assume the tone which is fashionable at Continental Courts; yet the smallest experience of a free Government will prove that perfect freedom of discussion may be habitually combined with statesmanlike prudence and reserve. Nothing could be easier than to point out the possible inconvenience of commencing the Parliamentary Session while the negotiations for peace have yet to assume a definite form. The House of Commons has contrived, however, by preserving a judicious silence, to avoid the difficulty which might have been incurred. It is because free assemblies are responsible that they feel their responsibility, and abstain from acting like mobs. Lord PALMERSTON expressed a simple truth when he declared, on Thursday evening, that the support of Parliament was highly valuable to a Government engaged in negotiating a peace. Individual Ministers may sometimes feel uneasy at their liability to instantaneous criticism and censure; but a diplomatist enjoys a marked advantage when he can produce vouchers for his statement that he speaks in the name of a unanimous people. If any difficulty should arise in the conclusion of a treaty, Parliament will be ready to avow that England, while desiring the cessation of the war, will yet refuse to conclude an unsatisfactory peace. The representatives of the people stand, in every sense, between their constituents and the Government. More responsible and more experienced than the general body of the community, the members of the House of Commons are forced to repress the warlike ardour which has for two years animated the nation. Mr. BAXTER declared on Thursday that in his own neighbourhood, notwithstanding the sufferings of the district from the war, a missionary of the Peace Society would scarcely be safe. The vehement sentiments which appear to be entertained by Mr. BAXTER's constituents find no expression within the walls of Parliament, and the feeling exhibited at the opening of the Session was on the whole favourable to peace; but in the present temper of the country, it would be utterly impossible for any Minister to make discreditable concessions to Russia.

Foreign diplomatists will, perhaps, be relieved from some superfluous anxiety by the calm demeanour of the House of Commons, as exhibited in a quiet conversation hardly rising to the dignity of a debate. Mr. ROEBUCK, though an accepted speaker, failed to arouse any enthusiasm when he denounced the reported conditions of peace as insufficient. Parliament cannot express its sympathies with that chivalrous disregard of consequences which becomes a Westminster meeting; and in a struggle which involves half Europe, it is useless to look at the question of war or peace from a point of view exclusively English. The feelings and wishes of the French Government may be criticised by irresponsible writers; but statesmen and members of Parliament are bound to look at facts before they undertake to estimate their moral bearing. In national transactions, as well as in private affairs, practical expediency depends on a compromise between desires and possibilities. Any fluent orator could dilate for hours on the advantages which might be derived from a more vigorous use of the preponderance possessed by the Allies. Turkey would be safer if Bessarabia were annexed to Moldavia,

Sweden might not unjustly recover the sovereignty of Finland, and the restoration of Poland would be applauded by all good men; but, in the mean time, Conferences are about to be held in Paris, and neither France nor Austria is disposed to prolong the war for the sake of distant and uncertain objects. Although many expectations may be disappointed, there can be no doubt that the English Government is right in taking a part in the pending negotiations; for, should the eventual peace correspond with the ostensible version of the Austrian proposals, the arrangement will be one which no prudent Minister would have been justified in rejecting. Mr. BRIGHT merely talks at random when he asserts that the terms of 1856 are not more favourable to the Allies than those which were discussed at Vienna. There may be no ground for extravagant exultation, but the House of Commons listened favourably on Thursday to every argument in favour of a loyal and serious negotiation. Lord CLARENDON will be backed by all parties if he enters cordially into the project for restoring peace to Europe; and his exertions will be the more successful when it is known that the proposed pacification is not extravagantly popular in England.

The discretion exhibited in the House of Commons was but imperfectly imitated by Lord DERBY. It was not unnatural that an opponent should impute blame to the Government for the mismanagement of the war in Asia; but an ex-Minister, who hopes to be a Minister again, might have been expected to abstain from invidious allusions to France. No object, except a momentary rhetorical success, can be attained by hints and insinuations that the policy of England has been hampered or thwarted by an unworthy jealousy on the part of an ally. There is no use in framing a political syllogism, however naturally the conclusion may flow from the premises, unless it leads to some practical and desirable result; and even if all Lord DERBY's assumptions were admitted, there might still be reasons against following them to their consequences. If it were ascertained that the FRENCH EMPEROR had impeded the defence of Asiatic Turkey, and that he had so far failed to carry out the general purposes of the alliance, a statesman, instead of displaying his knowledge of political secrets, would ask whether there was any advantage to be derived from the publication of his discovery. If, as Lord DERBY said, France, on a certain hypothesis, is not our ally, the answer is, "What then?" It is impossible to compel a great Power to adopt our own views; and it is prudent, when any discrepancy exists, to conceal it as far as possible from public observation. The utterance of suspicions founded on vague rumours is only rendered more offensive by the conventional affectation of disbelief. Lord DERBY ought assuredly not to have mentioned a calumnious report, unless he were able to contradict it; and if the story had not been untrue, there were, perhaps, still more stringent reasons for keeping silence. It was fortunate that Lord CLARENDON was able to confirm Lord DERBY's distrust in the reports to which he had given the utmost possible circulation; but the feat of walking over thin ice without breaking it is more hazardous than profitable.

On the whole, Europe will understand that, although Mr. ROEBUCK is dissatisfied, and although it is necessary for Lord DERBY, at the end of a long recess, to ventilate his oratory, Parliament and the country are ready for peace, if it can be concluded on the terms which Russia is understood to have accepted. Lord CLARENDON said even less than the truth when he declared that he would be powerless in the negotiations, unless he came, and was known to come, with an earnest desire to succeed. It would be unworthy of England to enter upon a Congress for the purpose of impeding a peace; nor must distrust, even of an adversary, be carried beyond the bounds of prudence.

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPOSITION.

THE conduct of war and of negotiations, more especially when they are to be conducted in conjunction with Allies, is the proper function of the Executive Government. Others may have greater capacity than the Ministers—they alone have the necessary information. Others may know better what is desirable—they alone can know what is possible. Others may understand better the inclinations of the English people—they alone can understand the inclinations of our Allies. They ought not to be divested of responsibility, but invested with the highest, by being allowed freely to discharge their momentous trust. Responsibility is lost, if everything is to be carried by a mob. At a crisis of diplomacy like the present, the Executive should be supported by the nation, as a general, however accountable, or however mistrusted, is supported at the crisis of a campaign. Should our Ministers not be the best, still we have placed our destinies in their hands, and we must patiently abide the issue. To call its rulers to account for their past conduct is the privilege and duty of a free nation; but to snatch the reins of government out of the hands of its rulers at every important crisis, is the madness of a mob, misnamed a nation. The energies of a free people, united under the Government of its choice, may laugh to scorn the wayward unity of a despot's will; but the unity of a despot's will is powerful and respectable, compared with the military and diplomatic Babel of a nation in which every man is his own plenipotentiary and his own commander-in-chief.

Our senators are beginning to see this. After two years of war carried on amidst the utmost recklessness of faction—amidst patriot inquisitions into national weakness, and exulting proclamations of national disaster—honourable members seem to have awakened to the consciousness that something is due from the Parliament to the Executive Government of the country, and that the conduct which, as rulers, they would prescribe to the nation, may receive a fitting illustration from their own behaviour. The public spirit of Englishmen seems, for a moment at least, to have regained the ascendancy over a spirit which would have better become the factions of Constantinople in the declining hours of the Byzantine empire. The praise of moderation has been merited even by party leaders who, during the first diplomatic struggle, were proved, by the information published in their organs, to be in correspondence with Russia, and to be acting as the advocates of that Power, and under her inspirations, for the purpose of embarrassing a Government composed of their political rivals, in a contest on the issue of which the destinies of Europe hung. The Peace party seem to have discovered that to reveal clamorously to the enemy the existence of a section of politicians ready to accept humiliating conditions, is not the way to incline an astute diplomacy to tender those honourable conditions which alone they must see (if they can see anything) that the English nation will accept. Lord DERBY, indeed, while affecting the language of forbearance, cannot let pass the opportunity of showing that high rank, great responsibility, and long familiarity with affairs of State, will not avail to produce habits of true magnanimity and self-control in minds in which nature has deeply implanted tendencies of an opposite kind. The Coppelian stoicism of Mr. ROEBUCK is not yet sated with denunciation, or with the vulgar applause which denunciation earns. The Opposition press still labours in its patriotic and wise vocation. And mob meetings, usurping the name of the people and attempting to override the Government of the country, show that the past conduct of Parliament and the Press has not been lost on those who look to the one for precept, and to the other for an example. But where should bitterness and detraction linger if it is not in Lord DERBY, Mr. ROEBUCK, the *Morning Herald*, and the patriots of Westminster?

We are not claiming confidence for the Ministry indefinitely, or upon any other ground than the manifest necessity of supporting against the public enemy, and in the face of Europe, the Government which we choose or tolerate, if we wish for success abroad, and for weight in the affairs of the world. With the return of peace, no doubt the position of this Government, as of any Government, will be changed. This is inevitable, not because the service rendered in the conclusion of an honourable peace is a reason for changing or overthrowing a Government—for, on the contrary, it is a very strong reason for continuing to support it—but because, with peace, questions of domestic policy inevitably return, and bring with them the duty of criticism and the

necessary conflict of opinions. To demand confidence in advance for Lord PALMERSTON's domestic policy would be absurd, inasmuch as we do not know what that policy will be. Devoted, during the most important part of his career, to foreign affairs, and ultimately borne into power by the nation as a War Minister at a time when war was the only question, the PREMIER, though officially bound by the domestic measures of his former colleagues, has never had the opportunity of showing what his own measures would be if power were placed, as it is now placed, entirely in his own hands. The programme given in the QUEEN'S Speech can scarcely be regarded as anything more than the provisional programme of what, after all, may be a war session. Peace, no doubt, will bring a richer promise; and independent men must wait to see what that promise will be.

Still we confess that we look forward to Lord PALMERSTON's peace Administration with a strong sense of the fact that his Government is the Liberal Government of the day—holding office for the Liberal party—and that no other section of that party is in a position to form a Cabinet. On this ground, he must receive, as far as possible, the support of those who feel that a moderate Liberal Government is the only one which, at the present time, can sincerely act in unison with public opinion. The number of such persons is large, and it is swelled by men who are of no party, and who feel the danger into which our representative institutions are being brought by the reckless violence of faction and the incessant changes of Government. No prospect opens before us, if the present Ministry should be unfairly and providently overturned, but one of complete confusion. The Government would be handed over, not to a great Conservative party, but to men, we may almost say avowedly, without fixed principle, who have boarded the Conservative vessel for their own purposes, and are attempting to steer it into office under Radical colours. To no class of politicians would such an event be less welcome than to the surviving members of the great Conservative party. It would be welcome only to uncontrolled and short-sighted revolutionists, who prefer Radicalism to Toryism, but either to moderation. And, therefore, to avert such a misfortune is the business at once of all rational Liberals, whether in office or out of office, and of all Conservatives who are wise enough to see that they cannot recall the past, but that, by taking a practical course, they may exert a useful influence for the future.

For the present, however, let us be content to congratulate Parliament on its restoration to self-control. Self-control is as necessary as military power to the greatness of a nation. Self-control has saved nations when military power has failed, and the magnanimity which thanked VARRO after Cannæ carried in itself the sure promise of ZAMA. But it must be owned that hitherto our military system has not been found more at fault during the present war than the power of the nation in restraining its own passions. The Ministers of the public vanity, self-styled the instructors of the public, have laboured to persuade the people that there is no cowardice or folly anywhere except in the Government, and that the sense of national honour, which is common in the lowest place, is a marvel in the highest. The result has answered perfectly well to the purveyors of this pleasant intelligence, since it has enabled them to erect a private authority of their own beside and above that of the elective Government of the country, and to interfere—perhaps to a greater extent than most people are aware—in those affairs of State which as distinctly are not, as criticism is, the duty of a journalist. But the result to the nation has been, that universal vanity has conspired with the personal ambition, or the wayward instability, of public men, to destroy our reputation in Europe for common sense, trustworthiness, and public virtue. That reputation has not been lost by arms, and arms will not retrieve it. It must be retrieved by a manful effort to repress in every breast tendencies which, if indulged, bid fair to make the greatest of free nations a mark for the just scorn of loyal and united slaves.

THE AMERICAN DIFFICULTIES.

THE American papers represent the PRESIDENT as still determined to push to an issue the quarrel which he has fixed upon England. Happily, however, the probabilities of a peaceful arrangement greatly preponderate, for it is doubtful whether Mr. PIERCE is in earnest, and more doubtful whether he will induce the country to support him. England and

the United States have more than once seemed to be on the verge of war. The North Western Boundary question, the Oregon question, and the affair of the *Caroline*, all involved more irritating circumstances than those which form the subject of the recent correspondence between the two Governments. So long as the result of the pending discussions is uncertain, it is desirable to avoid, as far as possible, any language which can wound the susceptibility of the American people, or tempt them to identify the national cause with the present holders of power at Washington—especially as there can be little doubt that the bad feeling and bad breeding which have been exhibited by Mr. CUSHING, and by some of his subordinates, will tend to produce a reaction among the reasonable part of the community. The same Message which appeals to national prejudice for support against England contains an imprudent and unstatesmanlike attack on some of the most powerful portions of the Union; and whenever the House of Representatives succeeds in constituting itself, the PRESIDENT will probably find sufficient employment in resisting the opposition which will be offered to his measures by Congress.

The alleged causes of quarrel are trivial in themselves, and the disputes which have arisen cannot be difficult of solution. The English Government will receive the unanimous support of the country in declining to offer any further satisfaction in the matter of the enlistment. The attempt to obtain recruits from the United States was undoubtedly a mistake; but the offence which had been unintentionally given has been fully repaired, and the indignation affected by the PRESIDENT and his officials is exaggerated, if not hypocritical. The balance of discourtesy is altogether on the American side. In the recent trial, the United States' Attorney, acting under the instructions of Mr. CUSHING, uttered the vulgar boast that the PRESIDENT whom he represented had, in the prosecution then pending, struck as near as he could strike to the Crown of Great Britain. An oversight on the part of a great Power, involving no practical damage or evil, is atoned for as soon as it is acknowledged and abandoned; and the country which sends out Filibusters over half the Western hemisphere cannot really have felt itself injured by the establishment, in Canada, of a recruiting office for volunteers who might arrive from the States. Sir FRANCIS HEAD has lately called attention to the connivance of some United States authorities with the Canadian insurgents. The English Government, on that occasion, judiciously abstained from attributing to the nation the outrages committed even by official persons; and the more enlightened class of Americans will not fail to be satisfied, in the present case, with the assurance that no slight to the institutions of the United States has been offered or intended.

The Central American question is more complicated, but scarcely more important. The PRESIDENT complains that the Mosquito Protectorate is maintained by Great Britain, notwithstanding the Convention of 1850, and that the Bay of Islands has been dealt with as an English colony since that period. Lord CLARENDON answers that Ruatan, as a dependency of Belize, was expressly exempted from the provisions of the treaty, and he adds that the recent and ambiguous phrase of Central America provides no definite or ascertainable territorial limits. For the purpose of the negotiations, however, a vague designation was sufficient. Mr. CLAYTON and Sir HENRY BULWER were occupied with the route of the proposed canal, and especially with its terminus at the mouth of the river of Nicaragua; and a separate provision applied to the Honduras settlement, three or four hundred miles to the Northwest. Belize was to be retained with its dependencies; and the question whether the Bay Islands are included in the reservation or in the renunciation is a frivolous pretext for war. It has been suggested, with unbecoming levity, that a possession of little value should be abandoned, if it gives occasion for disputes with America; but a foreign menace at once makes the maintenance of the most worthless rock a point of national honour. An English Minister is bound to hold any possession which he is summarily required to relinquish.

No such objection, however, applies to an arbitration by an impartial Government. The question at issue is of the simplest kind—England stands on possession, and it is for America to impeach the title. The PRESIDENT's pretensions, so far as they have any colour, can only be founded on the words of the Convention, for the so-called MONROE doctrine possesses no validity for foreigners; nor can the United States,

except under an express treaty, demand a cession of territory in favour of Honduras. It would be for an arbitrator to decide, first, whether the Bay Islands form a part of Central America; and secondly, whether, in 1850, they were included among the dependencies of Belize. The decision of both questions in favour of the complaining party would remove all difficulty in yielding to the American demands. Neither the semi-barbarous little republic of Honduras, nor its great Northern patroness, would derive any benefit from our abandonment of the colony; but the good faith of England would, in the event of an arbitrator's deciding against us, be vindicated by the fulfilment of even a latent condition in a treaty, while Mr. CLAYTON might boast of having, perhaps unintentionally, overreached his colleague in the negotiation.

If Ruatan is not worth much, the Mosquito Protectorate is worth less than nothing, inasmuch as it involves a duty unrewarded either by profit or honour. The singular relation which has grown up between a dwindling remnant of aboriginal Indians and the English Crown, is probably inherited from the buccaneers of the seventeenth century. The French and English adventurers, in their unremitting wars against the Spanish colonies, employed the Mosquitos of the Coast as servants and allies against the common enemy. In time of war, similar services were performed by the natives to the English Government, and as the Indians were not expressly included in treaties of peace, the Protectorate was maintained and occasionally asserted, although it was never recognised by Spain. In 1786, however, the claim was formally abandoned; and it was not until after the revolt of the colonies that the Mosquito chiefs again induced the authorities of Belize or of Jamaica to afford a nominal sanction to their rights. Till within a recent period, orders relating to the Mosquito Coast were occasionally issued from the Colonial Office to the Governor of Jamaica; but for several years past, the native chief or king has been placed under the management of a consul, whose title imports his residence in a foreign country, and not in a colonial dependency. It is true that the substantial dominion was vested in the English Government, and if the country had not been utterly valueless, it would probably have been annexed to the territories of the Crown; but the appropriation, which had never been formally consummated, has been finally precluded by the Convention of 1850. Setting aside the discussion whether the treaty was retrospective or merely prospective in its terms, it is at least certain that England now claims neither to colonize, nor to occupy, nor to exercise dominion over any part of the Mosquito Coast. Mr. PIERCE is fully aware that the Protectorate is only retained for the legitimate purpose of defending the Indians against their lawless neighbours, until some final and satisfactory arrangement can be made by consent of all parties. Costa Rica, the most civilized and intelligent of the Central American States, has always supported the policy of England in the neighbouring regions, and the scattered mongrels of Nicaragua and New Granada would long since have come to reasonable terms but for the advice of subordinate American agents, among whom Mr. SQUIERS formerly rendered himself conspicuous.

Such as it is, the Mosquito Protectorate is distinctly recognised by the Convention. The contracting parties undertake not to avail themselves of any protection which they may afford to any people or Government for the purpose of attaining indirectly objects which they had expressly renounced. This stipulation was introduced to prevent England from exercising dominion under colour of the Protectorate; and it need scarcely be remarked, that if it had been intended that the Protectorate should be abolished, there could be no need of guarding against its consequences. The Government of the United States has, indeed, consistently refused to acknowledge an Indian tribe as entitled to national privileges; but Mr. WEBSTER, as Secretary of State, distinctly admitted that the Convention in no way interfered with any Protectorate which could be legitimately claimed by England. Mr. MARCY cannot recede from the admissions of his predecessor, even if they had been less distinctly consistent with the language of the treaty.

Such are the frivolous pretexts for a threatened war between two kindred nations which are equally interested in the maintenance of friendly relations. More than one circumstance, however, renders a peaceful solution of the difficulty probable. The PRESIDENT and his more factious advisers know by this time that they will probably find

England at leisure, in case of need, to exert her whole force in the quarrel. At all events, the next step fortunately rests with the United States. There is no excuse for any act on the Mosquito coast which could lead to a collision, nor will the Senate sanction a declaration of war merely because Lord CLARENDON thinks his apology on the enlistment question sufficient; and although Mr. PIERCE may adopt the offensive measure of dismissing Mr. CLAYTON, the removal of a Minister does not necessarily lead to hostilities. Some years since, Sir H. BULWER was, in pursuance of a Ministerial intrigue, insolently dismissed from Madrid, but it was never proposed to resent the affront by a war with Spain. England can afford to wait until some insult is offered, too marked to be passed over without dishonour; and in the meantime, Mr. PIERCE will probably have for ever disappeared from the political stage. Public feeling will become favourable to the Government which, in dignified expectation, abstains from precipitating a quarrel. If, however, dangerous counsels prevail at Washington, the responsibility will rest with the demagogues who sacrifice to their selfish interests the peace of the world; and the PRESIDENT, if he renders a war inevitable, will find too late that he has

Struck for himself an evil stroke,
Wrought for his land an irredeemable woe,
When front to front in an hour we stand.

In England, there will be but one mind and voice to deprecate so wanton and ruinous an evil.

KARS AND LORD STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

THE Administrative Reform Association perseveres in a ludicrous existence. The opinions which we have repeatedly expressed as to the incompetence and presumption of its leaders, and as to its grotesque misapprehension of its proper field of activity, would certainly have been spared, if we had known that the Association intended to furnish a beautiful *reductio ad absurdum* of its principles and plans by meeting at the Freemasons' Tavern to debate the causes of the Fall of Kars. The questions connected with that event, so far, at least, as they can possibly come within the assumed province of the Association, are either entirely strategic or entirely Turkish. The points of the first class to be considered are whether the Allies were justified in retaining OMAR PASHA all the summer in the Crimea, when he might have been more usefully employed in Armenia—whether some part of the Anglo-French forces engaged before Sebastopol ought not to have been detached for an Asiatic campaign—and whether the diversion ultimately attempted by the Turks in Mingrelia, and connived at by the Allies, was well conceived and practicable. We ask, with respectful interest, which of the Administrative Reformers is to be listened to with submission on these questions of high strategy? Of course we are aware that Mr. LAYARD knows all about them. Like the man in DICKENS, who mastered Chinese Metaphysics by getting up the articles on "Metaphysics" and "China" in the Encyclopædia, and then combining his knowledge, Mr. LAYARD is assumed to understand Eastern warfare because he passed a few years in a remote province of Turkey, and once saw a battle in Russia from the maintop of an English man-of-war. But Mr. LAYARD was not at the Freemasons' Tavern last week, and there is urgent necessity for ascertaining whether public opinion will advance a step further in its logical processes, and will accept the modest MORLEY as a great authority on military matters, even though he never once in his life disinterred a bull, or sat a-straddle on a spar. Perhaps, however, we are to infer that the Association attributes the fate of Kars to administrative mismanagement exclusively? If so, the mismanagement is entirely one of the Turkish Administration. General WILLIAMS, though responsible to the English Government, was, in reality, dependent on the Turks for supplies of food, forage, and men, and it was the Turkish Commander at Erzeroum who ought to have re-victualled the more exposed fortress before the approaches were occupied by MOURAVIEFF. Are we to understand, then, that Turkish mal-administration is within the sphere of the remedial agencies recommended by the Association? What is the panacea to be? We suggest a system of competitive examinations—in the Koran, of course, as the natural basis of Turkish education—so many marks to be allotted to proficiency in the "Cow," and so many more to familiarity with the "Family of Amran"—a

Hadj from Mecca to be elected without further inquiry. Or what does the Association say to a Civil Service Commission—all candidates to be provided with a testimonial to moral conduct from the local Mollah, together with a certificate of formal initiation into the Moslem communion? Mr. R. R. MOORE would accept the Secretaryship, being ready to take anything, and Mr. LINDSAY and Mr. TITE might be associated with REDSCHID PASHA, as Commissioners. The accurate LINDSAY would appreciate that inattention to the minute shades of truth which is the vice of Turkish officials, and the disinterested TITE must be acquainted with the difficulties of Turkish finance through his former connexion with the Globe Assurance Office.

The pretext for the Association's meddling with this question is the alleged neglect of General WILLIAMS by Lord STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE. It will not escape the notice of a cynical observer that Lord STRATFORD is now attacked for *not* doing that which, in the popular libels on his conduct, forms the gravamen of the libeller's accusation. He is now impugned for *not* bullying the Turkish Government into doing its duty. In the eyes of people at their wits' end for a grievance, there is no inconsistency in hinting that Lord STRATFORD's temper has been intolerably spoiled by the exercise of uncontrolled power, and in asserting that he might, if he liked, have got SELIM PASHA superseded at Erzeroum. Strangely enough, too, it is rather on the first branch of the charge than on the last that they seem to take their stand. But even if these imputations could be established to the full against this great plenipotentiary, how is the case of the Administrative Reform Association improved? Has this conclave of charlatans the impudence to assert that Lord STRATFORD is an *incompetent* functionary? The simple truth is, that, if he be proved to be all which his persevering calumniators assert that he actually is, he is a sample of the best class of public servants which the nostrums of the Administrative Reformers might be expected to create. Lord STRATFORD was distinguished at Eton, and distinguished at Cambridge. He would assuredly have gone to the top in any competitive examination. He has had little connexion with party, and has gained nothing through personal friendships. Whatever respect he has obtained, he has compelled by the display of infinite laboriousness and exhaustless energy. If it be true that these great recommendations are balanced in him by irritable humours and a disdain of rival merit—if he is over-fond of power, over-indulgent to flattery, and intolerant of control by the extemporized chiefs whom Parliamentary Government occasionally sets over him—we can only say that he is a type of the shining lights of a bureaucracy, and that the countries which the Administrative Reform Association points out to our imitation are ruled and ridden by a perpetuity of Lord STRATFORDS.

It is almost impossible to write on this subject without apparently assuming the truth of the charges against Lord STRATFORD. But never was there a case on which common caution, to say nothing of common justice, more imperatively demanded a suspension of judgment. The unfavourable impressions of the English public on the point are immediately traceable to an article in the *Times*, which contained, not a narrative of facts, but an analysis of Lord STRATFORD's motives; and of these it is absolutely certain that the writer could know nothing. The more remote sources of the prejudice which undoubtedly exists against the man who two years ago was the popular idol, and who snuffed therefore in profusion the incense of the *Times*, are to be sought for in the persistent slander which has assailed him from one or two quarters ever since the commencement of the war. We suppose that condemnatory evidence never yet filtered through channels so polluted. Suspicion naturally attaches to the revelations of domestic treason, and Lord STRATFORD's foes have indeed been they of his own household. He has been bitterly, steadily, and successfully decried by those who were bound to him by the sacramental tie of official connexion, and by the yet more sacred obligations of personal gratitude. Men who owe the beginnings of their reputation to his generosity and protection have inoculated London society with their little spites and infinitesimal jealousies; and the popular mind has learned to regard Lord STRATFORD as a waspish incapable, on the authority of witnesses whose devious progress through Europe might be tracked by a livid smear of lying, like the trail of a snail over a green leaf. Even, too, if the worst could be proved, there would be room

for that delicacy which teaches a high-spirited people to go the utmost length in averting its eyes from the stumbles of those who have rendered great services to their country. If the peace which seems likely to be negotiated, has really been worth the winning, Lord STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE has done more to build up this barrier against Russian cupidity than any one Englishman who has not exposed his life in actual conflict. The eulogy which was passed the other day on Lord PALMERSTON might have been transferred to Lord STRATFORD—it would have lost somewhat of its surprising impudence, and gained materially in correctness:—"Such a peace will be a suitable termination to the long epoch of a life devoted, with but little support from political party or popular sympathy, to thwarting, counteracting, and overthrowing the designs of Russia, to frustrating and foiling her at every point, with a firmness not unworthy of the great founder of the liberties of Europe, whose name has just been illustrated by the pen of the most eloquent of our historians." We would not for an instant do less than justice to Lord PALMERSTON, but, so far as his policy can be expressed in a single formula, it has consisted rather in opposition to Austria than in resistance to Russia. But of Lord STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE it is literally true, that his career has been "a long epoch" consecrated to the labours which the *Times* describes; and it will not look well on the page of the MACAULAY of 1956, if the "popular sympathy," which has scantily supported him during its continuance, shall desert him utterly at the moment of its triumphant consummation.

MR. BRIGHT AT HOME.

MR. BRIGHT, among many accomplishments proper to an orator, possesses the art of composing impressive perorations. Ancient custom and the laws of rhetoric have permitted, in the concluding portion of a speech, a liberality of ornament and a degree of judicious self-laudation which would have interfered with its general argumentative construction. Great performers on the platform, as well as in the theatre, profit by the old stage direction, *Flourish of trumpets—alarum—Exeunt*. After sympathising for two hours with satirical—not to say invidious—criticism on public men and public opinion, an audience is most easily roused to a parting burst of enthusiasm by an eloquent appeal to generous and elevated sentiments. It is due, however, to Mr. BRIGHT to say that he is no mere artist in rhetoric when he reminds his hearers that there are steeps of Alma in morals, as well as on fields of battle; and when he boasts of the courage with which he has himself climbed them, he expresses his own practical conviction of an important truth. A politician of undoubted firmness and consistency may be excused for adopting even that mixture of metaphors which expresses his resolution to pass the baits of ambition without turning aside, to make that which is just and true the loadstone of his career, to confront the batteries of ridicule unblenched, and to swim against the stream. Mr. BRIGHT is capable of all these virtues; but, in addressing an applauding multitude of admirers, he can scarcely be said to have found an opportunity for exercising them. It was not necessary for his purpose that he should dilate on many other qualities which are almost equally essential to a statesman. Tolerance, prudence, consideration for the feelings and even for the prejudices of others, are generally found indispensable in the government of men. Notwithstanding his gratification at the absence of overtures to join Lord PALMERSTON's Administration, Mr. BRIGHT probably entertains a reasonable desire to become a member of some future Cabinet; but if such a contingency should occur, the Minister will find reason to wish that many of his most successful speeches had been speedily forgotten.

Little experience of life is required to show the inexpediency of making enemies needlessly. The Manchester leaders were not, indeed, to blame because they were odious to the Protectionists; nor can it be said that their present unpopularity with the great body of the nation has been gratuitously incurred, for the advocates of peace at any price necessarily come into collision with the supporters of any war. It is not easy, however, to understand the policy of declaiming against institutions which the speaker has no present desire to attack, and no expectation of overthrowing. "The venerable and venerated Monarchy" escapes, for the moment, from the lash of

the orator, but the House of Lords is stigmatized as consisting of "forty or fifty dilapidated peers, who come for an hour or two before dinner, under the pretence of legislation, into their gilded chamber;" and the Church of England is taunted with its "vast revenues, devoted to less than one-third of the people, and with its mitred prelates, also sitting in that gilded chamber." Mr. BRIGHT is perfectly aware that there is no portion of English society in which his Russian sympathies so readily find favour as among a large portion of the peers whom he holds up to ridicule; but his desire to give pain, and to court the prejudices of his manufacturing audience, diverts him from his immediate and serious object of advocating peace on any terms. The paradox of treating as one great blunder the whole policy of England since WILLIAM III., is still more mischievous to Mr. BRIGHT's character as a political leader. It is true that the National Debt has grown up since the end of the seventeenth century; but it is absurd to forget that the population and resources of the country have grown far more rapidly. The long war with France left England richer and more powerful than it found her; and the long peace which succeeded produced a prosperity which has been truly called "the admiration and envy of surrounding nations." We know what has taken place—we cannot know the result which might have followed from the adoption of Mr. BRIGHT's contempt for "the liberties of Europe." The first and most certain consequence would have been the return of the STUARTS under a French Protectorate; and the subsequent dependence or partition of the British Islands would have been determined by many circumstances which it is now impossible to assign. It has not been found in practice that commerce and manufactures have flourished best in those countries which have, whether by choice or compulsion, ceased to participate in the liberties of Europe.

It would be a waste of time to discuss in detail Mr. BRIGHT's arguments against the war. They have been frequently used before, and the fallacies which they involve have been repeatedly exposed. An opponent of war in general necessarily finds himself at a disadvantage in a controversy on the merits of a particular war; for however logically he may reason on the premises of his adversaries, it is felt that they cannot be his own. The minor, that the war with Russia is unjustifiable, is inextricably involved in the major, that war can under no circumstances be justified; and a suspicion consequently arises, that the conclusion, however plausibly it may be supported, was in reality foregone. Mr. COBDEN thinks it imprudent to attack a Power with a limited maritime trade and a thinly-peopled territory; but it cannot be doubted that he would have found equally plausible reasons against an attack on Holland, or America, or China. Mr. BRIGHT ridicules the alarm which has been occasioned by the aggressive policy attributed to Russia; but even if PETER, and CATHERINE, and NICHOLAS have been unaccountably belied, readers of history cannot admit that ambitious conquerors are impossible. It might have been argued, before the event, that XERXES had no intention of invading Greece; but the advocate of Persia might have been fairly asked whether, on the possible occurrence of the contingency which he had shown to be improbable, he would continue to sneer at the ignorant agitation which found vent at Salamis and Platea.

The loss of money which has been incurred is serious, and the sacrifice of life is grievous. Even the Russian loss may fairly be lamented by Mr. BRIGHT and other philanthropists; but although cost and slaughter are elements in the preliminary question whether war is justifiable, they are entirely irrelevant to the merits of the actual quarrel. All advocates of the right of war must admit that, in certain cases, it becomes an object to destroy life in the soldiers and sailors of the enemy. There are even moralists who hold that the sufferings incurred by the defenders of a just cause are not the greatest of evils. An old writer, or singer of leading articles in verse, said that it was "noble to die, falling in the front ranks, a brave man, fighting for his own country;" and the sentiment has been translated into every language which civilized men have used since the days of TYRTÆUS. All nations may have been mistaken, and the Peace Society may be in the right; but there is little connexion between the losses inevitable in war and the merits of the quarrel with Russia.

Mr. GIBSON and Mr. BRIGHT are bound to explain away the consent of authorities to which they are opposed. Count NESSELRODE, in his late circular, admits that the coalition

against his Sovereign is every day extending. England may have blundered, and France may have been misled—Turkey may have misunderstood a benevolent and pacific neighbour—Sardinian statesmen may have justly forfeited the esteem which was accorded to them by Mr. BRIGHT until they began to put their principles in practice—but why did Sweden enter into the recent treaty? Why has Austria leaned more and more to the cause of the West? Above all, why did Prussia, in the early part of the dispute, concur in the general judgment of Europe? If the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER'S *Treatise on the Influence of Authority in Matters of Opinion* is carefully studied, it will probably be found that political propositions derive some weight from the assent of competent, and especially of unfavourable witnesses. The burden of justifying the war may fairly be thrown on those Continental Governments which would have most eagerly grasped at any plausible ground of censure against England, but which have nevertheless found it impossible to withhold their concurrence in the principles and objects of our policy.

Praise of the United States, and of the mild and pacific PIERCE, forms a natural topic in Mr. BRIGHT'S harangue and Mr. JEFFERSON BRICK, the American war-editor, would doubtless come in for a share of his approval, if he opposed England in her dealings with Russia. The proposed conditions of peace are welcomed with a sneer, as at once satisfactory and worthless. It may be hoped that a time is coming in which Mr. BRIGHT'S great abilities and honesty of purpose will find a worthier field of employment. While we respect his fearless consistency, we must add that the nation also has been honest and courageous from the beginning of the struggle to the end; and the best security for the permanence of the approaching pacification will be found in the knowledge that England, though deeply attached to peace, is capable, not only of commencing a war, but of persevering in it at any cost of life or of treasure. There are many who believe that the opposite delusion formed one of the primary causes of the struggle which Mr. BRIGHT and his friends have so constantly deprecated. It is a circumstance worth observing, that the thanks of the Manchester meeting were voted, not only to the members for the city, but to General THOMPSON, who supported the war at its commencement, and to Mr. HEYWOOD, who has apparently not withdrawn his adhesion to the subsequent policy of the Government. No public man could be found, even on that congenial platform, to support the doctrines which Mr. BRIGHT and Mr. GIBSON have pertinaciously advocated.

THE PITFALLS OF THE LAW.

THE proverbial hazards of the law have seldom received a more striking illustration than in the cause of "WALKER v. ARMSTRONG," which was decided on Tuesday last by the Master of the Rolls. The victim on that occasion was not one of those contentious gentlemen so dear to lawyers, who are never happy without an action, but a straightforward Navy Captain, who, for all that transpired in the suit, may have hated the land-sharks with the heartiness common to his profession, and never have willingly troubled an attorney except to draw his marriage settlement or to make his will. But not even thus could he escape the quicksands of the law. The history of his case may be shortly told, and will serve to warn the owners of patriarchal estates that they, as well as others, are liable to be juggled out of their lands by the intricacies of the law and the mistakes of its professors.

Many years ago, Captain WALKER was fortunate enough to gain the hand of a wealthy heiress. The lady was the absolute owner of two considerable estates—one her own by family arrangements, the other a gift by her brother's will. There was, of course, a settlement upon her marriage. It was, or rather it was intended to be, very much in the usual form. The husband and wife were to have an absolute joint power of revoking the deed, should they be so minded, and of resettling the estates. Mrs. WALKER was also to have the power of appointing the brother's estate (as we may call it for distinction's sake), after the death of her husband and herself, to any person whom she might select by will. In other respects, the usual limitations of a strict settlement were to be followed; that is to say, the husband and wife were to enjoy the property successively for life—it was then to be entailed on the children

of the marriage—and if there were no children, the whole was to go as Mrs. WALKER should by will appoint. To provide for the unlikely event of all these estates and powers being exhausted, the names of three of the lady's relations, RICHARD ARMSTRONG, ROBERT ARMSTRONG, and THOMAS BRUCE were to be inserted as ultimate tenants-in-tail. To frame a deed to carry out such intentions as these is, with lawyers, a mere matter of routine—common-form work, as they call it. There was no peculiarity about the case that required any special talent or ingenuity. However, to make everything safe, the family solicitor entrusted the business to a conveyancer of note. The deed was prepared and executed, the marriage was solemnized, and the parchment stowed away in the lawyer's box.

About a year after the wedding, a legal friend of the Captain's chanced to look at a copy of the settlement, and discovered that it contained two blunders of the grossest kind. One of these was that the brother's estate was so settled upon the children of the marriage as to go first to the sons and their male issue, and then to the daughters and their issue—the common provision for the general issue of sons having been inadvertently omitted, so as altogether to exclude the daughter of a son from the inheritance. The second blunder occurred in the disposition of the other property. The conveyancer forgot to give a power to Mrs. WALKER to dispose of the estate by will in case she should have no children, and left it to go, in that event, to the ARMSTRONGS, whether Mrs. WALKER might desire it or not. Unprofessional readers may not appreciate the inexcusable nature of such omissions so readily as lawyers. It may, however, be enough to say that the forgotten limitations enter into ninety-nine out of every hundred settlements, and that the effect of the blunders was to disinherit one section of the lady's descendants, and, in a very possible event, to deprive her of the control over her own property, and to give it to distant relations. Fortunately, these serious defects were not irremediable. The joint power of revocation had not been forgotten. By virtue of this, the husband and wife could utterly sweep away the whole of the existing settlement—its estates, powers, blunders, and everything else it contained—and redistribute the property according to their wish. This it was resolved to do; but no other alteration was contemplated than the correction of the professional blunders which, if not discovered in time, might have scattered the family estate in directions very far from the channel in which it was meant to descend.

The greatest precaution was taken on this occasion to guard against any further mischance. Mr. CHARLES BUTLER, the most eminent of conveyancers, was selected to advise on the proper course, and to prepare the necessary instrument. A second deed was accordingly executed, by which Mr. and Mrs. WALKER first revoked the earlier settlement, and then re-enacted, so to speak, the trusts and powers they had destroyed—supplying, of course, the omissions that had occurred in the first deed. Everything now seemed secure. The blundering marriage settlement could do no more harm. It was, in fact, dead—destroyed and turned into waste-paper by the force of the revocation. All the arrangements originally contemplated were supposed to be revived in the new deed. There was a new joint power of revocation, the fac-simile of that which had done such good service; there were provisions for all possible issue of the marriage, whether sons of daughters, or daughters of sons—and there was besides a special power inserted for Mrs. WALKER to dispose by will of both portions of the property in case she should happen to leave no child. It was in the year 1825, that this amending deed was duly signed, sealed, and delivered. In 1827 Mrs. WALKER, being still childless, thought it prudent to make a will (as the settlement of 1825 empowered her to do), and to provide for the possibility of her dying without children; and by this will she left the bulk of her estates to her husband.

The devolution of the property was now secured whatever might befall, and the gallant Captain was undisturbed by lawyers until 1840. At that time he wanted to exchange a small piece of one of the estates for a more convenient strip of land. The deed of 1825 had provided for such a case, and had given the requisite authority to the trustees. It was necessary, however, to refer to it; and so it came again under inspection, probably for the first time since its execution. The instant it was seen by the gentleman who now acted as the Captain's conveyancer, he dis-

covered a blot still more fatal than the errors it had cured. All the provisions for the descent of the estates, after the death of the married pair, were perfect, but not a syllable was said as to the enjoyment of the property before that time. Captain and Mrs. WALKER had dwelt in the mansion, and taken the rents for the last fifteen years; but it was hard to say who was the legal owner, and the only thing certain about it was, that the Captain had not a scrap of interest in the domain which he was occupying as his own. It is true the old original deed had given him and his wife immediate life estates in the whole; but they had annihilated these as well as all the other clauses of the instrument, by their express revocation, and in reconstructing the limitations by the second settlement, the life estates had either been totally forgotten by the draftsman, or carelessly omitted by the attorney's copying clerk. The new defect was, therefore, much more serious than those which had been removed. The Captain's position was like that of a man who had pulled down his house because it wanted a pantry, and rebuilt it without kitchen, parlour, or bed-room. The matter could not rest here. Although the second lawyer had proved worse than the first, there was no choice but to take counsel of a third. A more distinguished man than BUTLER was not to be found, but pains were taken once more to secure the best advice the profession could give. There was indeed no doubt as to the necessary steps. The second power of revocation must be employed as the first had been. The deed of 1825 must be demolished like its predecessor, and its place supplied by new limitations and new powers, in the same terms as before, except that a clause must be inserted to restore the life estates which the second deed had destroyed.

A third settlement was accordingly executed, and this time it contained no blunders. The deed of 1825 was revoked, and laid to rest by the side of its elder brother, powerless and defunct; while the powers it had contained, as well as the neglected life estates, were inserted afresh in the deed of 1840. By that, as by the former instrument, Mrs. WALKER was authorized to leave her lands by will. In 1854, she died childless, without ever having altered the devise which she had made in her husband's favour under the powers of the deed of 1825. He claimed the estates as devisee, but another legal difficulty stood in his way. But for the will, the property would have devolved upon the ARMSTRONGS. The will was made under the express authority of the deed of 1825, and, except by that authority, Mrs. WALKER had then no power to devise the lands at all. But that deed, and all that it contained, had been annihilated by the revocation in the later settlement of 1840. From that moment, the authority which gave validity to the will was gone, and the will that rested upon it was gone also. The last deed, it is true, contained a provision as large as that which it destroyed; but it only gave a future power, and could not support a will made thirteen years before. All that was necessary to give effect to Mrs. WALKER's disposition was, that, after having destroyed the power which enabled her to make the first devise, she should remake her will under the later authority which she had substituted for it. A lady and a Captain, however, are not to be expected to think of technicalities like these; and their professional advisers, who ought to have known the consequences of the revocation, never hinted at the necessity of republishing the will.

This was the closing blunder that crowned the series of mishaps, but it was not the end of the Captain's troubles. He tried the desperate remedy of a Chancery suit, but in vain. His counsel were of the ablest; and the Court was anxious to relieve him, and even delayed the judgment for months, in the hope of finding some ground for establishing the will. But it was too clear that it could neither stand upon a power which had been revoked, nor on one that had no existence when the will was made. The Court reluctantly declared, therefore, that the estate must go from the husband to the remote relations of his wife, and left the unlucky plaintiff a standing example of the ruin which a careless or incompetent lawyer may effect. In the words of the Judge himself, the inexcusable blunders of the profession, and the pitfalls of the law, have frustrated the intentions of a lady who believed she had effectually disposed of her estates, and who took the best professional advice to enable her to carry out her purpose. Such are the perils that surround those who are obliged to trust to English law and English lawyers.

MONEY.

"IT is unpleasant," says HAZLITT, "not to have money. It is to pass through life with little credit or pleasure—it is to live out of the world, or to be despised if you come into it—it is not to be sent for to court, or asked to dinner," &c. &c. And there is no calamity which people are so loth to confess, even in its milder forms. It is the rarest thing in the world for a man to plead want of money as a motive for economy. One would think that the English nation, with its vast and undoubted wealth, might afford to be candid in this respect, and to acknowledge any occasional scarcity of cash under which it may chance to labour. Yet the fact is never frankly admitted. At the "tightest" epochs, it is never poverty that we complain of—it is the Bank of England, it is the House of Commons, it is the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—it is great X, in short. Somebody is doing something. England, like THACKERAY's *Mr. Smith*, is "kep' out of her money." It may seem odd, at first sight, that a rich country should be poor, but it will not puzzle those who are practically acquainted with economic and monetary questions. "My wants," says the Count in one of Mr. DISRAELI's tales, "are few; a fine house, fine carriages, fine horses, a complete wardrobe, the best opera-box, the first cook, and pocket-money—that is all I require. I have these, and I get on pretty well." "Well," said Charles Doricourt, "you are a lucky fellow, Mirabel; I have had horses, houses, carriages, opera-boxes and cooks, and I have had a great estate, but pocket-money I never could get. Pocket-money was the thing which it cost me most of all to buy."

The reserve in the Bank of England is the pocket-money of the nation. If we put into theoretical language the distinction taken in the passage just quoted, we may say that wealth exists in two forms—mutable and immutable. The immutable are the most numerous, and, for nearly all purposes, the most valuable. Of this sort are broad acres, factories, warehouses, palaces, mansions—in short, nine-tenths of the realized and accumulated labour which is the pride of civilized society, and the material of new forms of production. This kind of wealth is infinitely various; but, even where its value does not largely consist in the *pretium affectionis* set upon it by individual wants and tastes, it has the inconvenience of being locally fixed, and consequently inconvertible. *Mutable* wealth, on the other hand, has no such characteristics. Of this, the type is money. Political Economists are always giving us some new definition of this mysterious entity, but we need not go into these thorny controversies. It is enough for our purpose that there is *something*—it may be a bank-note, or cash credit, or a sovereign, or a shilling—which is daily transferable, and which is desired by all who desire anything. Its essence is to have no "earmark." Nobody singles out for preference a particular part or specimen of this description of wealth—all the industrial portion of mankind are alike engaged in the pursuit and acquisition of this universally recognised and impartially appreciated commodity. Of course, it is evident that people who are rich in immutable wealth may, at any given time, be poor in that which is mutable—in other words, a man may have much that he does not want, and yet not have money, which he does want.

It is so likewise with nations. It is quite possible that a nation may abound in particular kinds of wealth, and yet want, for the moment, the mutable kind which will interchange for what it does want. This is what we mean by saying that the bullion in the Bank of England is the pocket-money of the country—it is that familiar, indefatigable, transigratory substance which will turn into whatever we desire. The nature of money is, indeed, more easily definable in the case of nations than in that of individuals. If, owing to the operations of trade, a balance is payable from one country to another, it must be paid in actual bullion. The numerous forms of currency and credit which circulate among a people have a special, defined purpose, and must be kept to that purpose. "You can't conceive," said an indolent friend of ours, "how I hate my postage stamps when I have no money." To attempt to pay a balance to France in bank-notes would be like trying to buy oxen with Queen's heads.

These are no new considerations—indeed, in an exaggerated form, they prevailed before our received systems of political economy were heard of. Readers of ADAM SMITH will remember that his treatise has a destructive as well as a constructive thesis. The Mercantile System, as it used to be

called, which confined the name of wealth to the precious metals, did not rest on theoretical argument—for, as ADAM SMITH easily shows, gold is no more exclusively entitled to that designation than brass or iron—but was grounded on the superstitions of the money-market. In spite of all argument, people in Lombard-street will be dismal when gold is leaving the country, however much iron or brass may remain. They are aware that, though bullion is not the sole kind of wealth, it is the most efficient specimen of mutable wealth. They know, too, that this sort of riches is as necessary to commerce as the fixed sort—that without it we could neither lend, nor buy, nor borrow. Deeply as the doctrines of ADAM SMITH have penetrated into the English mind, we may still hear, in the daily talk of men of business, turns of thought and expression which savour of the system he overthrew.

These considerations have a peculiar application to a state of war. It has been said that war is a "sensible thing"—which, we suppose, means that it likes hard cash. According to LOUIS XIV., the last guinea will always win. As the Duke of WELLINGTON said—"The wealth of Great Britain is very great, but its efficiency is crippled by the difficulty of procuring specie;" and he might well say this at a time when there was not a guinea circulating in the country, and when he was much troubled to find money for the payment of soldiers and store-dealers. The present war is peculiarly covetous of coin. It is carried on at an enormous distance from home, among Oriental and semi-Oriental nations, to whom gold and silver have always been dear, who have little trade with us, who do not care for our manufactures, and to whom western cash seems a blissful dream. The hoarding propensities of those races make the matter worse. All observers of Oriental life notice, as a predominant feature, the tendency of the people not to spend any trifling money they may chance to get, but to store it up against an evil day; and it is a serious addition to the practical expensiveness of the present war that it is waged among nations of this peculiar taste.

The result of the export of all this "mutable wealth" from England is a scarcity of it in England. We cannot send our money to the shores of the Euxine and retain it in Threadneedle-street. The effect of this migration of coin on our commerce is obvious. The hoard in the Bank of England is not like the treasures accumulated by Eastern princes—it is of daily use in trade. For every ounce of gold in the great reservoir called the issue department, there is somewhere or other a corresponding sum of bank-paper. This is either in the banking reserve on the other side of the establishment, or it is out in active circulation among merchants and traders; and for the purposes of commerce it is immaterial to which of these two uses it is for the moment applied. It is of course necessary that there should be a certain amount of the purchasing medium in the hands of the public, but it is equally necessary that banks which hold other people's money till they want it should have the means of meeting their wants. If you reduce either of these amounts, you injure trade, but you injure it most by diminishing that part of the circulation which apparently does least. The moment a banker's reserve falls off to any serious extent, he begins to diminish his loans—he must let out less, in order to keep in more. This is the meaning of the "tightness of money." That mutable wealth, that "loanable capital," that "something," whatever it is, which most people desire to have at their banker's, and which merchants must have to meet their bills, is reduced; and merchants will consequently have more difficulty in meeting their bills—must pay higher rates of discount—must, in the end, stop payment, if the pressure continues long enough, and if they have not private funds of their own.

This is evidently independent of any peculiar legislation on the subject. Suppose there were no legislation about it at all. Imagine—what would be possible, though inconvenient—that Government took no care of the currency, metallic or unmetallic. What would be the result? We should, no doubt, have a private coinage—we should have sovereigns with ROTHSCHILD'S mark, and shillings with Lord OVERSTONES head. But this would not help us. We must send "OVERSTONES" to the Crimea, and cosmopolitan gentlemen would have, perhaps, a prejudice in favour of "ROTHSCHILD'S." We may, it is true, depreciate our currency—we may say, in our own dominions, that a merchant who has promised to pay a sum of gold, value 100*l.*, shall pay only a quantity of paper, value ninepence. And this,

no doubt, will aid the particular merchant in question. But we cannot do this in the Crimea. Unless we make bank-notes "bayonet-tender," they will be of no use among the Tartars. As we go to the Africans with beads and knives, we must go to the Asiatics with silver and gold. It is evidently absurd, therefore, to impute the present scarcity of money to the Act of 1844. Many ingenious speculators are endeavouring to do so, but they will not convince the plain sense of plain men, who know that, if cash goes to the East, it will be scarce in the West—that under no code can money which is hid in a hut at Varna be used in discounting bills at Liverpool. Sir ROBERT PEEL was a great man, but he did not *invent poverty*. Under every kind of legislation, under the Act of 1844 or the Act of 1944, there will be a difference between poverty and wealth—between times when money is sent beyond sea, and times when it is employed within the seas.

THE CHAMBER OF HORRORS.

THE successful application to the Court of Queen's Bench for the removal of the *venue*, in the trial of WILLIAM PALMER for murder, gives rise to some serious reflections on the duties and responsibilities of the public press, in relation to criminal charges pending against a prisoner. It cannot be doubted that Serjeant WILKINS made out the very strongest case in favour of the rule, which was on Thursday made absolute. Common fame, indeed, and the notoriety of the facts, were in themselves a sufficient ground for removing the trial from Stafford, and for extending to the prisoner every indulgence which the law permits to an accused person. If PALMER still claims a trial at bar, we think that his claim ought to be attended to. Lord CAMPBELL, indeed, does not consider that sufficient grounds have been shown for this last application; but, if so, we should be curious to know what grounds would, in the judgment of the Chief Justice, be sufficient. What PALMER very properly requires is a trial conducted under the most solemn auspices; and if he believes that a trial at bar alone gives him a chance, or even gives him a superior chance, of an equitable decision, let him have it. Justice is the more likely to have free course, both against and in favour of a criminal, if the accused has every facility in challenging the arraignment.

In these days of unlimited communication, however, the old grounds for changing the *venue* to another county no longer exist. All England is, for every practical purpose, the immediate neighbourhood of Rugeley. PALMER gains little by the mere change of *venue* to London—and this partly from the mode in which coroners' inquests are now conducted, and partly from the special notoriety given by the press, in this instance, to rumours unfavourable to the accused. Last week, we indicated some grounds for our dissatisfaction with coroners' inquests in general; and we are glad to find Lord CAMPBELL saying, "that in this or in any case, it would be very inexpedient to let the trial take place on the coroner's inquisition, which is generally defective." Formerly an inquest was a summary process, a hasty and extemporaneous proceeding, a rough sort of hedgerow inquiry, an inquisition of death, the essence of which consisted in the view of the body. It was never intended that it should assume the form of a trial, in which the accused had no defender or defence because he was under no indictment. As an *ex parte* proceeding, in which it is impossible to produce counter evidence, it is loaded with injustice to a suspected party. If such evidence as that of Dr. TAYLOR—able and candid as we believe it to be in itself—may be produced against any person without allowing that person to tender counter evidence, it is impossible but that his case must be prejudged. To avoid or prevent prejudice after such an inquiry as that which has already taken place, although in law it amounts to nothing, is impossible. We do not complain that, after what has occurred, the very strongest feeling is excited against PALMER; but we do complain of the state of the law which invites prejudice, and which compels society to assume the guilt of a man before his trial. If an inquiry "which is generally defective"—that is, which is one-sided and passionate—renders an impartial trial all but impossible, the sooner we totally abolish such a procedure, which leads to no definite result, and which in this case is contemptuously set aside by the superior courts, the better for English justice.

That the evidence taken on the inquest should operate unfavourably to the accused, we may regret, but so long as

the law sanctions such an inquiry, we cannot complain that the evidence adduced is published. But the press has not contented itself with the publication of evidence. PALMER and his solicitor very properly complain of "the numerous paragraphs published in the newspapers assuming his guilt." In many organs of the periodical press, a decorous silence has been kept on the direct point of PALMER's guilt. But the wrong done even by respectable journals has been as great, though the language held has been less direct. Facts—assuming them to be facts—have been alleged, which ought only to be matter of evidence, and which should be treated with exclusive reference to the laws of evidence. But much more than this has been done. How stands the case?

The Coroner's Jury has brought in a verdict of "Wilful Murder" against WILLIAM PALMER, in three several instances. He stands accused of having murdered JOHN PARSONS COOK by administering strychnia—of having murdered his wife by emetic tartar, or some other subtle preparation of antimony—and of having murdered his brother by prussic acid. In each and all of these cases there may, for aught we know, be much to be said, first, as to the question of fact—that is, whether any one of the parties was murdered at all, or in other words, whether the respective poisons were criminally administered—and next, as to the question of scientific principle, whether the alleged tests are exhaustive. In one of the cases, that of WALTER PALMER, it is not too much to say that the evidence as yet given of the administration of prussic acid would never convince a judge. And, as regards the tests to discover vegetable poisons, while Dr. TAYLOR is unable to pronounce that there is any available test of the presence of prussic acid, Mr. HERAPATH, another "distinguished toxicologist," comes forward to say that he is ready with such a test. Yet the Coroner's Jury has found WILLIAM PALMER guilty of administering prussic acid to his brother, simply, as it appears, *because* he once bought some. Dr. TAYLOR is unable to detect any poison in the body; but he thinks that WALTER PALMER might, nevertheless, have been poisoned, because prussic acid leaves no traces. Mr. HERAPATH says that he should have found prussic acid in any body which had been killed by that poison—the inference being, that as none was found in WALTER PALMER, none had been administered to him. Here is a direct and palpable contradiction between the toxicological authorities.

Then great stress is laid, and naturally enough, on the immense amount of life insurances effected, or sought to be effected, by WILLIAM PALMER. All this is not yet in evidence; and already one at least of the insurances effected on his wife's life appears to be satisfactorily accounted for. But this is not all. It is not enough for public opinion to be formed on the evidence given on the inquests—much irrelevant matter is imported into the case. We have before us a pamphlet, written not without considerable skill, which, in addition to the three murders with which PALMER is already charged, accuses him of having, about twenty years ago, murdered his father, a timber-merchant—his wife's father, Colonel BROOKES—his wife's mother, Mrs. THORNTON—"perhaps four legitimate children, hastened out of the world by their father—perhaps three illegitimate children similarly treated—probably a friend (one BLADEN), poisoned five years ago—certainly a friend (COOK), &c." In addition to this it is suggested that PALMER meant to poison "GEORGE BATE, Esq.," and Mr. STEPHENS, "COOK's step-father." It is also added that Mrs. PALMER, the mother, is a person of habitually unchaste life, and that PALMER is exactly like MANNING in Madame TUSAUD's Chamber of Horrors. We are asked, therefore, to believe that PALMER commenced his poisoning career at the ripe age of fourteen, he being now thirty-four—that he has actually committed thirteen murders on his own nearest and dearest—that he is privy to his mother's shame—that he is a blackleg, forger, and swindler, and steeped in every sort of immorality, besides being parricide, fratricide, and every other conceivable and inconceivable -icide—that he never moves without his pockets full of poison, and never sits down to table without drugging somebody; for "certain it is, that every member of the ring, who was ever in his house, now recollects either that he did not like the wine, or the soup, or the brandy-and-water, which, by the way, PALMER always recommended to be drunk off at one gulp, and not sipped in the ordinary style."

All this may, of course, be true; and when it is proved, under the solemn sanction of a British Court of criminal

justice, or when a tenth part of it is proved—when a single clear case of murder is established against WILLIAM PALMER—let him be hung on a gallows higher than ever HAMAN was hung. Could the terrible punishment of the Roman parricide be revived, we should say, prepare the sack and the mysterious dog, cock, viper, and ape. Let the winds scatter his ashes, and let his house be destroyed, and his name be never uttered in the mouths of men—let his memory be accursed. "Luke's iron crown and Damien's bed of steel" would be punishments too mild for such a monster of human-kind. But, however dear to all true instincts must be the desire to convict such a person as WILLIAM PALMER is alleged to be, much dearer are the rights of British justice. We can imagine no mockery more complete than will be the presiding judge's stereotyped caution to PALMER's jury "to dismiss from their minds all that has been published to the prejudice of the prisoner at the bar." Such oblivion is simply impossible—an unbiassed jury in this case is not in human nature. Lord CAMPBELL's edifying appeal to the press to admit no further discussion of the subject, like many of his Lordship's amiable platitudes, comes a little too late. For ourselves—and we are but expressing a growing feeling—the danger perhaps is against believing too little rather than too much against the accused. An unavoidable, but unfortunate, re-action may set in; and should PALMER, if really guilty, be acquitted, justice will have been obstructed by those most culpable arts which too many newspapers have adopted for the wretched purpose of inflaming the public mind, by ministering to the inhuman, though common, appetite for stimulants and horrors.

HOMER NODDING.

"THE Leading Journal" has often found a mare's nest—at last it has discovered a foal alive and kicking. From oology it has got to zoology. It has extemporized a statesman. *Frankenstein* created a man out of some crude scraps of tissue and muscle—the *Times* has invested a Transatlantic figure of speech with personality. The Ballot, according to our great contemporary, has done what the Greek poets did in elaborating a mythus. It has turned a mental operation into a man—in this case, into an American statesman. On Tuesday, the *Times*, speaking of the difficulties now attending the election of Speaker of the House of Representatives, thus commenced a leading article:—"Sedet, aeternumque sedebit; there seems no reason whatever why the labours of Congress should ever come to an end. From BANKS to SCATTERING, and from SCATTERING to BANKS,—sometimes 99, when the required majority is 105; sometimes 105, when the required majority is 113; nobody gains, nobody loses; nobody seems a bit nearer winning or losing than he was before. They pass round their allotted circle like the inmates of the great hall of the Caliph Vathek, and persist in an insane repetition of divisions for BANKS, RICHARDSON, FULLER, and SCATTERING—for SCATTERING, FULLER, RICHARDSON, and BANKS." We have all of us once and again heard of "scattering votes"—that is, of votes thrown away, in an election by ballot, on various candidates who stand no chance of success; and common readers, on finding the word "scattering" as the fourth column in the results of the Washington ballot, might chance soar no further than this very unideal view of the matter, that it represents the *colluvies* of vagrant votes. But this is our first meeting with Mr. SCATTERING in person. Will the *Times* favour us with the political and personal antecedents of this Mr. SCATTERING? Is the great rival of BANKS a "Hunker"? His chronicler is certainly a Soft-shell. Or can it be that we are all of us wandering in a world where MEDAMOTHI has its latitude and longitude, and OUTIS a family estate? After all, it may be that "Ways and Means" is a firm in the City, that "Previous Question" is a chairman of committees, and "Amendment" a political notable. Or are the old Indian legends, just chronicled by LONGFELLOW, matters of fact? MUJKEKEWIS, we are informed, is the west wind; and doubtless that eminent politician, Mr. SCATTERING, is his lineal descendant. The American newspapers will be surprised at the new candidate for their speakership, who has acquired so enviable an immortality in the columns of our contemporary; and the world nearer home will be edified by this remarkable instance of that depth and accuracy of information which the great guide of European intelligence displays in its intimate, not to say exclusive, knowledge of Mr. SCATTERING and his candidateship.

APPLICATION OF ABSTRACT TRUTH TO PROFITABLE PURPOSES.

AN unlooked-for practical application of fossil animal remains was discovered some dozen years ago, the value of which has since been annually on the increase. The farm-labourers throughout a great part of Suffolk, and adjoining districts of Norfolk and Essex, are, for the most part, profitably occupied during the intervals between more direct and pressing agricultural work, in digging, say from five to fifteen feet below the surface, until they come upon a peculiar stratum, composed chiefly of rolled, broken, and water-worn shells and bones, and called, from its prevalent colour, the "Red Crag." The bones, usually in the form of more or less rounded or cylindrical nodules, are sifted from the shelly rubble, and collected in heaps for sale, under the name of "cops," or "coprolites." The price given for these "cops," which at present ranges from 50s. to 3*l.* per ton, at the pit's mouth, is at least as remunerative for the labour bestowed in extracting them as any other kind of farm-work; and the presence of the red crag stratum gives an additional value to the tenement, in proportion to its thickness and proximity to the surface.

The name "coprolites," by which the nodules sought for are now known throughout the counties where they occur, and in the market, is that which Dr. Buckland applied to the petrified faeces of extinct animals, the nature of which previously problematical fossils he was the first to discover. A superficial inspection of the crag nodules led some geologists, in fact, to regard them as coprolites; for most of these nodules more or less resemble those bodies in outward form. The term being a distinctive one, and of scientific sound—though soon abbreviated, according to the custom of Saxondom—was eagerly seized upon by parties interested in the nodules in question, and a patent was taken out for preparing from them, under the name of "coprolites," an alleged new kind of manure. The nodules in question are, in fact, for the most part, bones and portions of bones and teeth of whales, quadrupeds, and fishes, which, through long attrition by water, whilst rolled to and fro on some ancient sea-beach, have been deprived more or less of every characteristic outward feature, and reduced to the coprolitic or nodular shape. Their value, as the basis of a manure equal to or surpassing the purest guano, depends upon the retention of the usual proportion of phosphate of lime, which is the main hardening salt of bones and teeth. The process by which the insoluble phosphate is converted into the soluble superphosphate, is the same as that which is employed in the manufacture of that potent manure—the super-phosphate of lime—from ordinary recent bones, as described by Liebig before the discovery of the "cops" in Suffolk had been made.

The first step in this discovery is a remarkable one, and well illustrates the practical value which may be latent in a purely abstract scientific, and otherwise seemingly unprofitable, idea. In 1840, one, and perhaps the first-discovered, or first-cared-for, of the nodules of the crag, was obtained, and regarded as "a specimen," by a zealous collector of fossil remains—Mr. John Brown, of Colchester. From its very shapelessness it was a puzzle, and had passed as such from one palæontological inquirer to another,* until it came into the hands of Professor Owen, who, by the application of the microscope, detected in the problematic fossil the characteristic texture of a tooth, with modifications most resembling those of the dental tissues of the tooth of the cachalot, or sperm-whale. The result of this investigation was briefly announced in a "Report on British Fossil Mammalia," communicated to the British Association in 1841; and the fossil itself was more fully described and figured in the Professor's subsequently published work on *British Fossil Mammalia*, where the fossil tooth is ascribed to a new, or unknown, and probably extinct species of whale, under the name of *Balenodon physaloides*. (p. 536, figs. 226, 227.)

For a time, it was regarded as a rare, and, as it seemed, unique fossil. But, in 1843, Professor Henslow, during a sojourn at Felixstow, on the coast of Suffolk, collected several of the concretions or nodules in the Red Crag—which there extends like a coloured strip along the cliffs—and, on submitting the specimens to Professor Owen, he learnt that they also were fossilized parts of a whale, or rather of several kinds of whale, most of the nodules being portions of a curious and characteristic bone of that animal, called the "tympanic" or "ear"-bone. The attention of geologists was first more especially called to the animal origin of the concretions of the Red Crag, in the paper by Professors Henslow and Owen, descriptive of the above-mentioned fossils, read to the Geological Society in December, 1843; and the correspondence of these fossilized

fragments in chemical constitution with recent bones being analytically determined, Professor Henslow, in a popular lecture at the Museum of Natural History at Ipswich, called the attention of agriculturists and agricultural chemists to the probably very extensive source of phosphatic material, whence a super-phosphate-manure might be obtained as readily as from recent bones.

Practical men were not slow in availing themselves of the fruit of pure scientific research thus openly and disinterestedly set before them. One man, more practical and business-like than the rest, having verified the fact of the profitable applicability of the crag-fossils, set about availing himself of the Patent Law in order to monopolize the benefits of the geologists' discovery. Some curious and interesting facts bearing upon the state of that law came out upon the trials before the Lord Chief Baron, at Guildhall, in 1848 and 1850, in reference to this legalized monopoly, when the philosophic discoverers, who were summoned to give evidence, were somewhat astounded by hearing the amount of the profits—thousands of pounds sterling—which both plaintiff and defendants had been annually reaping from the geological field to which the world in general had been, in the simplicity of the said philosophers, freely invited.

The material result to the primary discoverer may be summed up and exemplified in the following note addressed to him:—

Lincoln's Inn, Dec. 17, 1850.

DEAR SIR,—We beg to inform you that the action of "Lawes v. Purner and others" was to-day specially fixed for Monday next at ten o'clock, when it will be necessary you should attend punctually on the subpoena with which we served you.

We are, dear Sir,

Your faithful Servants,

A B C and D.

Excuse our reminding you it will be desirable the fossils we submitted for your examination should be in court.

The essence of the case seemed to the philosopher to lie in this—that whereas the previous publication, by Liebig, of the mode of turning bones into manure, would have barred a patent right as touching the fossil bones and bone dust of the Red Crag, it ceased to have that effect when said fossil bones were called "Coprolites," or "Mineral Phosphates." No evidence, however, was offered to prove that they differed in any respect from bones, save in having lain a longer time in the earth, and become thereby more brittle, with the loss of a gelatinous constituent, in nowise affecting the chemical nature on which the value of bone as manure essentially depends. It appeared, however, that the patentee had "enrolled a disclaimer as to bones and bone-dust," in 1848; and this, with some other considerations from the depths of legal science, left the contending parties, so far as the summary of the case was intelligible to the palæontological mind, much in the same state in which they stood before the trial, with leave to try again.

To the palæontologist there remained the satisfaction of receiving from countless crag-pits every nodule that, to the eyes of the rustic exhumators, seemed to be at all out of the common. From the evidence thus presented to him he has had the unspeakable pleasure of determining the existence, in the Red Crag of Suffolk, of the remains of a new fossil rhinoceros—new, that is, to English ground—to wit, the *Rhinoceros Schleiermacheri* of his friend Professor Kaup, who first discovered the rare species in the miocene tertiary deposits near Darmstadt. In addition to this melliflously designated pachyderm, the English professor has discovered a mastodon, a mammoth, and a tapir, extinct species of deer and boar—both new also to England, but identical with Hessian miocene fossils—a fossil leopard and a fossil bear, an extinct kind of horse or zebra; the same huge species of deer (*Megaceros*) which is so common in the marl beneath the bogs of Ireland; a singular, almost toothless, dolphin (*Ziphius*), identical with that extinct species first described by Cuvier, from the crag at Antwerp; together with thousandfold confirmations of the four or five species of great cachalot-like whales, which were originally determined by their water-worn teeth and their "cetolites" or fossil ear-bones.

The predominance of these cetacean fossils, the admixture with the mammalian remains of bones and teeth of extinct fishes—some as, e.g., the chimaeroid *Edaphodon*, belonging exclusively to the eocene tertiary age—others, as the great *Megalodon* shark, which had upwards of 600 trenchant piercing teeth of from four to five inches diameter in its two jaws, and which ravaged the seas from the eocene to the pliocene periods inclusive—the abundance of nodules, of which a fossil crab, or some other marine crustacean, is the basis, and the shelly nature of the comminuted medium in which all these fossils are found, suggest some ancient sea-coast, beneath the surf-waves of which the whale's skeletons, as from generation to generation they successively drifted ashore, have been broken up, and the fragments gradually rounded by long-repeated rolling on the tidal strand.

The "Red Crag" is, however, the result of the breaking-up by surf-waves of previous strata of different tertiary periods. Some of its fossils are unquestionably from the eocene or oldest tertiary formation, while the majority belong to the miocene or older pliocene period; and a few, e.g., the mammoth and gigantic Irish deer, indicate that newer tertiary or drift deposits have been mingled with the main body of the Red Crag.

Should any reader of this sketch be disposed to select for his autumnal sea-side sojourn the quiet out-of-the-way hamlet of Felixstow, he may be led to muse, as he traces the seam of Red

* "Some years since, whilst looking over a collection of fossils in the possession of Mr. Brown, of Stanway, I was struck by the appearance of a cylindrical nodule from the Red Crag of Felixstow, which seemed to me to exhibit indications of an organic structure unlike that of any fossil body which had previously come under my notice. With the permission of the owner, I had a section made of this fossil; but the characters which it presented upon being cut did not enable me to arrive at any determination respecting its real nature. At a subsequent period I learned from Mr. Brown that the nodule in question had been submitted by Professor Owen to microscopic examination, and identified as the tooth of a cachalot." On the Occurrence of the genus *Physeter* (or sperm whale) in the Red Crag of Felixstow. By Edward Charlesworth, Esq., F.G.S. *Proceedings of the Geological Society*, 1844, p. 286.

Crag along the varied face of the cliffs, on the conditions under which it has been there deposited. He may dream of the old ocean in which those toothed whales and gigantic sharks of rival bulk, unknown in modern seas, once swam and tempest; and he may recast in imagination that fair continent, now submerged, on which rhinoceroses, mastodons, and tapirs trod. But he will inevitably become bewildered in his attempts to calculate, or even to conceive, the lapse of time during which those operations occurred which have resulted in dispersing over many square miles, and burying beneath many feet of newer strata, that mine of organic and chemical wealth from which the agriculturists of the eastern counties now obtain their most valuable manure.

EVENING JOURNALISM.

WE all know what Morning Journalism is, and we have been told at what expense of lamp oil and bodily strength its thunderbolts are forged. But beside the greater revolve the lesser lights, and as soon as the shades of evening prevail, the wondrous tales of the morning are taken up by the literary moons. There is no pretence of midnight labour here. The good things are all struck off at leisure in the calm hours which succeed a ten o'clock breakfast, and as the writer has the morning papers before him, he has but to knead his little loaf out of the wheat which others have sown for him. But, while he is fresh for writing, he knows that his readers will be tired by the time they get the paper in their hands. They will have gone through their journal in the morning, been tickled by smart leaders, looked over the advertisements, and picked out the cream of the accidents and police reports. What remains for the Evening Journalist to do? He can print the news of the second edition of the Ministerial morning paper as "Latest Intelligence," and he can gather odds and ends of gossip. But this is not enough. There is a vacuum in the Englishman's day, between five and seven, which the Evening Paper is expected to fill up; and accordingly, it offers leading articles, constructing them after an easy fashion, and embracing an amazing variety of topics. The similarity of the circumstances under which they are produced occasions a general similarity of cast in all the evening papers. Still, to those who know them, they are distinguished by a separate and individual character. The *Sun* has its own slashing way of trampling out the enemies of the people; and the *Globe*, rich in its vein of solemn respectability, discourses on everything with judicious gravity, and in a spirit of unimpeachable Whiggism. It can, however, condescend to the assumed tastes of its readers; and it handles little matters as an Evening Journal must do, though always with great seriousness and dignity. Only a few days ago, it examined and settled, with the most patient impartiality, an interesting discussion between a parson and his curate, as to who should have the hat-bands presented at a funeral. These are just the kind of problems which one has strength to enter on in the hungry hour before dinner, and we may be glad to have them handled so soberly and discreetly.

But the evening journal *par excellence* is the *Standard*. It has in perfection all the qualities peculiar to this department of journalism. Whatever it does, it does with its whole heart. If it praises, we can almost see the layers of unctuous laudation—if it blames, it digs in the knife to the hilt. There is no subject, celestial or terrestrial, on which it has not a fixed familiar opinion, which it is ready to state on oath, and which no change of circumstances can alter. This is the secret of its success—its opinions are cast in iron, and its language possesses a sort of amiable coarseness which can present those opinions in a hundred forms. To our mind, it is by far the most entertaining of periodicals. It says such odd things—things that seem natural in its mouth, because we know what we have to expect, but which would appear scarcely sane elsewhere. And it is also the most fearless of papers. It does not care for consequences; and, provided it hits its enemy, it is indifferent whether the blow rebounds. We may take up the file of last month, and we shall find it better than a play. In the field of politics, the special object of its hatred is Austria, to the frustration of whose knavish tricks it devotes itself manfully. We will give a specimen of its invective:—

True, under the wretched Aberdeen administration, Austria did drag England in her train, and through all her own dirty ways; but, whatever his faults in other respects, Lord Palmerston is not like Lord Aberdeen, and will not permit that England shall be commanded by the meanest Government, and—its patron at St. Petersburg only excepted—the most perfidious Government in Europe. (Jan. 19.)

It is observable in this passage with what adroitness the sword which is used to execute Austria is made also to play about other heads, and how Russia and two political opponents are despatched by a side-stroke. This is the great secret of the art of abuse; and all who wish to practise this useful art should study the *Standard*. It is a perfect master of the satire which is based on contrasted praise, and which equally blackens the person to whom the praise is given, and the person to whom it is denied. Austria and Prussia, for example, suffer equally under the pungency of the following passage:—

The conduct of Prussia has been stupid and shabby enough; but to do Frederick William justice, it has not been so shabby as the conduct of Austria; for the Prussian monarch has practised no deception. He has declared a neutrality, much to the profit of his smuggling subjects; and we are not aware that he was bound to desist by any other obligation than the common interest of Europe and of the civilised world. (Jan. 16.)

As might be expected, Mr. Cobden is not a favourite, and the lash is applied to him both freely and frequently. But Mr. Cobden writes well; and if his opinions may be disputed, they cannot be despised. Therefore it costs most people some trouble to answer him; and a good reply either to his speeches or his pamphlets is thought both an effort and an achievement. A morning paper would have to consider his arguments and to strike out counter-arguments—to remember or invent facts—to dress up its remarks in a sparkling style—and, where it was personal, to damn with faint praise, and sting with a hidden sneer. But the *Standard* has none of this labour. It does not find it hard to answer Mr. Cobden. It undertakes the business with the utmost readiness, and knocks him over in the simplest manner possible. Mr. Cobden, for instance, in his recent pamphlet, put forward the curious proposition that, in war, carriage by sea is dearer than carriage by land. We may wonder at this statement, but how to refute it? Must we dive into statistics, and draw up tables of freights, tonnage, insurances, comparative wear and tear, number of hands employed, and so on? Not a bit of it—the *Standard* is not in that line of business. Rejecting all learned disquisitions, it offers the test of personal experiment. *Solvitur ambulando*. Five shillings and a day's outing will convince Mr. Cobden of his error. The whole article is so short and so characteristic, that we venture to give it in *extenso*:—

We are really tired of Mr. Cobden, for few things are more wearisome than the exposure of an empty pretender to the dupes he has made, and who will give little thanks for the exhibition of the fruits of their stupidity in trusting to "a copper oracle." A correspondent, however, puts a question which we think demands an answer from "the man of unadorned eloquence." Making France the starting post in both cases, how much further is the Crimea from Marseilles than Moscow is from Boulogne? And as to the greater cost of money and time, which Mr. Cobden alleges to be incurred by the maritime carriage of men and supplies, we advise Mr. Cobden to compute how much he would save in money, time, and we may add comfort, by taking the high road to Ramsgate in preference to a steamboat. (Jan. 14.)

The *Standard* is great on the Sabbath question, and defends the Jewish observance of Sunday with undaunted pertinacity. Its wrath has recently been excited by the formation of a society which aims at effecting the opening of museums and similar institutions on Sunday afternoon. Here, again, may be seen the advantage of a direct and unhesitating method of attack. The *Standard* always takes the bull by the horns. It would be comparatively easy to assert that the opening of any place of secular edification on the Sunday is objectionable, as it is difficult to draw a legal line between desirable and undesirable species of amusement. But such triumphs are too lightly won. The *Standard* rushes into the very camp of the enemy, and cuts away the ground from under their feet, by showing that no one kind of amusement is in itself better than another—or, if there is any difference, that the balance is against museums. Moreover, it heightens the interest which the singularity of this position is calculated to create, by taking us behind the scenes, and by slyly letting us know what kind of recreation the "we" who writes, innocently prefers:—

But, it is said, only one or two exhibitions are to be opened in desecration of the Sabbath. Why only one or two? Why not all, if any? What claim has a museum or a palace that may not be as justly accorded to a monkeys' ball, such as we have seen in Germany, or the frolics of Punch and Judy. Tastes and judgments differ; and by some (we shall not say whether we ourselves are of the number), the mingled gravity and gaiety of the monkeys, and the domestic conversations of our old wooden friend and his partner are preferred. There is nothing to be said in favour of opening museums and palaces that may not be urged with equal force in favour of the monkeys and Punch and Judy, whose exhibitions, we may say in passing, are much more decent than many things we have been obliged to see in museums and palaces. (Jan. 26.)

Subsequently, with commendable modesty, it characterises this article as "our rude remarks;" and we must confess that every now and then the *Standard* plays off an artillery rather too formidable. It is not very scrupulous in its allusions—it brings Scripture to bear in an unexpected manner, and launches its adversaries into outer darkness. The society to which we have referred professes to labour in behalf of the poor, and makes it its main object to provide a better resort than the pothouse for those who have only one day of rest. Some critics might have allowed its promoters to enjoy the consciousness of good motives, and have only attacked the object proposed to be effected. But the *Standard* is merciless. Where it strikes, it grinds to powder; and it disposes of this portion of the subject in the following terse and startling manner:—

The impious missionaries of Sabbath-breaking would tell us that all their care is for the poor. Judas Iscariot said the same thing. (Jan. 25.)

Nor is it only with the weapons of Scriptural allusion that it is hard on its opponents. It delights in having recourse to similes and metaphors borrowed from topics which are generally hushed up in society. It certainly gains power in this way, because the effect is surprising, and therefore the eye is attracted to an argument the intrinsic merits of which it might have refused to see. And, for some reason or other, this instrument of abuse is especially reserved for the confusion and annihilation of the *Times*. Indeed, the very mention or sight of the obnoxious journal seems to affect the "we" with a sort of mental incontinence, and makes him rush off in imagination where we fear to follow him. For instance, in the number of January 9th, we find the following paragraph; and as the force of invective can scarcely go further, it shall be the last specimen extracted:—

For sixty or seventy years the *Times* has pursued its career consistently in the most impudent inconsistency. This has obtained it readers from among

all classes and conditions of men, and it is right to confess that care and a liberal expenditure in the more innocent departments of journalism have secured a multitude of those who utterly abhor both its principles and its political practice. Like other shameful utensils, it has become to them a matter of domestic necessity, if only on account of its advertisements.

LAW REFORM.

THE reference in the Queen's Speech to the subject of Law Reform, and the removal of the excitement of war, render it probable that the present Session will see some efforts made in that direction. The task to be performed is so vast and so various that it is most important that it should be undertaken with some definite notion of what it is desirable, and of what it is possible, to effect. We fear that the cause has suffered much from the ignorance from which few even of the professional Law Reformers are free, and more from the unconnected, and sometimes impracticable, nature of the measures which they have usually advocated. The popular notion, disseminated by writers like Dickens, is that the law is a mass of cruel absurdities invented by lawyers for their own profit, and that all that judicial decisions and statutory enactments have effected has been to perplex a very simple subject. On the other hand, the Reformers which veteran lawyers have devised for the remedy of palpable inconveniences have too often been of such a character as to justify Mr. Mill's sarcastic remark, that the law has been reformed as you might reform a pair of old shoes, by cutting holes in them wherever they pinched. He must be a very clear-headed man who could tell what are the precise circumstances under which a bare trustee is protector of a settlement, or how much of the old learning of contingent remainders has survived the 8 and 9 Vic. c. 106.

Those who know that, under any circumstances whatever, law must be a very difficult study, and the cause of many hardships and much injustice—and who are at the same time aware that it is at present much more difficult to learn, and much more unjust, than it need be—will be equally unsatisfied with the foolish popular delusions upon the subject, and with the merely "practical" and unsystematic attempts at reform which have of late years been so common. Such persons generally assert that it is not cobbling or patching the existing system that will satisfy either the public or the legal profession—that what we want is a Code—that the old law books and reports must be distilled into a portable and intelligible form, so that the nation at large may have some conception of its rights and obligations, and the lawyers some chance of understanding their profession. In support of this position, they urge not only the examples of Rome, France, and many of the United States of America, but the monstrous anomalies of our existing system. They allege that no one—not the most learned of the fifteen Judges—can pretend to anything more than a very vague notion of the law applicable to any given state of facts. They say that the law of England is based upon an indefinite something called common law, reduced to writing by certain obscure and entirely unauthorized persons, whose words, from the mere circumstance of their antiquity, have been by degrees invested with all the weight of legislation, so that the private opinion of Coke, Littleton, or Sheppard, is of hardly inferior force to that of Queen, Lords, and Commons. The opinions of these writers may be, it is allowed, to a certain extent, ascertainable; but though they fix the tradition as far as they go, their decisions leave a vast field unoccupied—a field which has been assiduously cultivated for several centuries by the judges of the three Superior Courts of common law. The labours of the latter have produced a vast crop of decisions, the reports of which fill many hundred volumes; and the cases are conflicting, uncertain, and reported with very different degrees of accuracy. Court is opposed to court, judge to judge, and often a decision is pronounced *dissentientibus* some, and *dubitantibus* others.

Even this, however, is not all. The judges, we are told, might have legislated wisely; if they had legislated freely, but they are legislators only *sub modo*. The fiction of law is, that their judgments are merely declaratory or interpretative. When, therefore, they determine, for example, that they rather think, but are not sure (Coleridge, J., *dissentiente*), that an action would lie for the malicious procurement of a breach of contract, they do not mean that such is their view of what is right, but that they incline to the opinion that, if there had been a rule on the subject four or five centuries back, it would have been to that effect. By this arrangement, it is contended, we decide what the law is, not with reference to what would be most expedient now, but by employing the best intellects we can find in conjecturing what it ought to have been under the Plantagenets. The part of this system which most strikingly illustrates the elasticity and originality for which it earns so much praise, is, perhaps, say our critics, that which refers to crime. If a little boy breaks a baker's window, and steals a roll, between nine p.m., and six a.m., it is in the discretion of the judge who tries him to imprison him for a week, or transport him for life. Two thieves, jointly indicted for picking a pocket, may, in many cases, by severing in their challenges, secure the acquittal of one, because picking a pocket is a felony. Two bankers, charged with disposing of securities belonging to their customers and worth thousands of pounds, have no means of enforcing their demand for a separate

trial, because they are merely charged with a misdemeanour. It is some consolation to them to remember that, for the same reason, their property is unaffected by their conviction; whilst the judgment of the Court transfers to her Majesty an indisputable right to the mosaic gold chain and dirty linen which form the whole property of the attainted swell mobman.

But it is not alone to that indefinite something called common law that these sceptical objections apply. They apply with equal, if not with greater, "force to the equally indefinite something called equity." Equity once meant whatever the Lord Chancellor thought right. It now means that course of conduct which is least inconsistent, under the circumstances, with what some or all of the Chancellors, Masters of the Rolls, Vice-Chancellors, and Lord Justices, have at some time or other thought right—regard being had, moreover, to the rules of common law and the decisions of the House of Lords, especially when (as has sometimes been the case) that noble body consisted of the Lord Chancellor, hearing with judicial indifference appeals from himself.

Upon these solid foundations, say the critics of our legal system, is raised a superstructure of statutes, curiously contrived to fill up each other's deficiencies. The wisdom and the wants of many generations have provided so ample a provision of them that they repeal, re-enact, overlap, qualify, and rectify each other in every possible direction. If you wish to understand what is meant by "40s. by the year above all charges," and to find out the effect of possessing that amount, you must refer to the Reform Act, the 7 and 8 William 3, c. 25, the 18 George 2, c. 18, and the 8 Henry 6, c. 5. On comparing these Acts with the arguments and judgment in *Barrow v. Buckmaster* (12 C. B. 664) and the cases there quoted, you may at last arrive at the meaning of the expression. The statutes, say our cynical objectors, are like a huge heap of building materials—beams, bricks, hewn stone, masses of mortar, and not a little rubbish—all thrown up in a mass together. By signal good luck you may avoid holes, and pick your way in safety over the heterogeneous mass; but if you are not very careful of your steps, some treacherous clause will give way, and you may disappear into all sorts of pitfalls and caverns—you may fall from statute to statute, all touching, but none meeting your case—till your descent is arrested by some antiquated monument of mediæval legislation, or by the unfathomable mysteries of the common law. Certainly, we are told, that is a wonderful system which gives a man who traffics in Russian funds his choice between three months imprisonment under 17 and 18 Vic. c. 123, and hanging, drawing, and quartering, under 25 Ed. 3, st. 5, c. 2.

To a certain extent, we think these objections unanswerable. No one who is practically acquainted with the law can deny that it is now in a state closely resembling that of Roman jurisprudence in the time of Justinian; but that we are as yet prepared for the remedy which Justinian applied, we can by no means admit. The very abuses which have made a Code so necessary have rendered its construction by the present race of lawyers almost impossible. Indeed the form of our government is by no means favourable to such an undertaking. Is it conceivable that Parliament would delegate legislative functions of such enormous magnitude into any private hands? Is it possible to suppose that, if such delegation were to take place, a Code debated in Committee would retain anything more than the semblance of that scientific completeness without which it would be a mere delusion. Unity of purpose and of execution is as indispensable to a code as to a picture. The House of Commons would find it as impossible to vote the one as to paint the other.

Believing, however, that though a Code is for the present not to be hoped for, all law reform is tending in that direction, we should wish to see those who are interested in the subject unite to obtain objects which are within their reach, and which would greatly facilitate the ultimate codification of the law. The first of these objects is the improvement of the system of legal education. Probably there is no class of men in the world who are so thoroughly masters of their profession as English barristers, but there is none whose education is so special and so entirely unscientific. With the exception of a few textbooks, an English barrister's whole knowledge consists of a knowledge of cases—that is, of little points, or private enactments, made with reference to the particular circumstances which called them forth. All that the keenest intellect and strongest memory can hope is to know where to find what is wanted. To reduce English case law into a set of principles and rules would be as impossible as to perform the same operation on the Statute Book. Codes are composed of materials of which English law hardly furnishes any specimens, and with which the minds of English lawyers are altogether unfamiliar. If, however, the education at present given by the Inns of Court were made compulsory upon all candidates for the bar, and if the study of jurisprudence and of the laws and codes of other countries were enforced upon all such persons, one of the greatest of all steps towards codification would be taken. For the present, the most useful course open to us is what is known by the name of consolidation—that is to say, uniting in one enactment all the statutes bearing upon a given subject, and repealing the rest. This was the course taken in 1849 with the Bankruptcy statutes, eleven of which were consolidated—not over skilfully, it is true—in the 12 and 13 Vic. c. 106. There is no doubt that the same process might be, with great advantage, applied to the criminal statutes, and to many others.

Another most important—as it would be the easiest—means of preparing for a code, would be the re-organization of our existing system of reporting. This most important function is at present a bookseller's speculation. Certain publishers agree with gentlemen, upon whose appointment the Judges exercise a kind of informal veto, to report all cases of importance decided in a particular Court. The payment is, we believe, proportioned to the quantity so reported. It is obvious that such a system is liable, even in the hands of the ablest and most conscientious men, to very great abuse. Many cases are reported at greater length than is necessary, and many others are reported which had better have been omitted altogether. The function in question is clearly one which ought to be discharged by a public officer, under the superintendence of the Judges. To an unprofessional reader this may appear a small matter, but those who understand the extent to which the work of legislation is at present entrusted to mere individual taste or opinion will recognise the importance of the reform in question.

By these or similar changes, we think it possible that the vast mass of matter which now forms the law of England may gradually come to be more or less understood, and more or less prepared for scientific re-arrangement and classification. Hasty attempts to cure the evil would, we are confident, only aggravate it. On the other hand, if the law remains unreformed, and goes on accumulating at the rate of eight or nine volumes of reported cases, and a volume of statutes at large, per annum, no human memory will be capable of retaining it, and no human tribunals will be sufficient for its administration.

MUSIC.

MADAME GOLDSCHMIDT-LIND

WE have heard of an experienced playgoer of the last generation, who, on being consulted by country friends as to the part in which they could see the elder Kean to the greatest advantage, always recommended that of *Richard the Third*. It was not because he thought that the *omnium gatherum* which, under that title, did duty thirty years ago for a Shakspearean drama, was by any means the greatest, or even the most effective, drama in the great Tragedian's repertory—nor, indeed, one in which a theatrical *habitué* would at all care to see him or anybody else—but because it afforded Mr. Kean the best opportunity of exhibiting, in the course of one representation, the greatest variety of those "effects" to which his popularity was supposed, however unfairly, to be attributable. In theatrical parlance, "the part contained all that he could do." The Miscellaneous Concert, we take it, will prove to be Madame Goldschmidt's *Richard the Third*; for there can be little doubt that the series of performances in which she is now engaged will answer the end of showing her admirers "all that she can do" much better than the oratorios with which her late re-appearance among us was inaugurated. Public curiosity will be more thoroughly satisfied by performances arranged especially and avowedly for the exhibition of the extent and variety of her powers, than by those which, though really of a higher order, involve elaborate and expensive accompaniments which only tend to conceal them from the common observer.

The second of Madame Goldschmidt's miscellaneous concerts at the Hanover Square Rooms, was not only well fitted for its especial purpose, but proved an agreeable and interesting entertainment in itself—an excellent specimen of its class. In the programme were found, more than once, the names of Mozart and Weber, accompanied by those of Mendelssohn, Rossini, Bellini, Spontini (a name now-a-days of rare appearance), De Beriot, and the husband of the *beneficiaire*, Mr. Otto Goldschmidt. Any fault to be found with so compact a programme should be laid rather on concerts in the abstract than on this particular specimen. At the best, this kind of entertainment is a piece of patchwork, every item of which is as likely as not to put out what comes next to it, instead of, as in a well-constructed oratorio or opera, leading up to it, and setting it off to the best advantage.

Madame Goldschmidt's part in the performance began with a *Rondo* (for voice and violin obligato) attributed to Mozart. Certain turns of melody, and an exquisitely *morne* effect produced by the iteration of the same figure on muted stringed instruments, are doubtless the invention or suggestion of the great master; but the composition as a whole exhibits little of the constructive art in which even the earliest works of Mozart are never wanting, and must be regarded (in the absence of very strong evidence) as a *reficimento* of unappropriated stray thoughts, put together by Süssmayer, or some one of his musical assistants or executors. It displays, however, to great advantage the *breadth* of Madame Goldschmidt's style, and that control over each individual note which is indispensable to the perfection of *sostenuto* singing; while the chief defect of the song—a multiplicity of closes—gave occasion for the appropriate introduction of some very elegant *fioriture*. The violin obligato hardly demanded, from its beauty or difficulty, the importation of Herr Deichmann—a respectable performer who, later in the evening, favoured the audience with a very sober and irrefragable interpretation of one of those solos by De Beriot which, on other occasions, we have thought lively.

The great scene from *Der Freischütz*, "*Wie nahte mir der Schlummer*," is, perhaps, of all existent soprano solos, that in

which the gifts and accomplishments of Madame Goldschmidt can be exhibited to the greatest advantage. With the single exception of Madame Schroeder-Devrient, no *artiste* in our recollection, has ever got through this long and trying song without such obvious signs of fatigue as to suggest congratulation at the end being reached, rather than compliment as to the method of reaching it. Physical power would seem to be the last rather than the first quality to be mentioned in connexion with any performance of Madame Goldschmidt's; but the unflagging energy with which she completes the most laborious tasks—constituting, as it does, one of the charms and marvels of her execution—is due as much to "well directed industry" as to natural organization. Nor is the conception unworthy of the magnificent physical powers which are used to give it expression. The ever-varying emotions the succession of which it has been the business of the composer to describe in this long soliloquy, must have been realized, in Madame Goldschmidt's singing and acting, by the dullest and coldest among her auditors. To this, of course, the length of the piece, which, as we have said, adds so essentially to its difficulty in other respects, contributes greatly. Moreover, every piece of vocal music is most effective in the language to which it was originally set, be that language what it may; and every singer is heard to the greatest advantage in his native tongue, be his accomplishments as a linguist what they may. *Der Freischütz* is a German libretto, and German, though not literally the native language of Madame Goldschmidt, is nearer akin to it than any other in which we can hope to hear her in music of the highest class. No acquaintance with the language which Weber has "married to immortal" music is wanted to make her auditors appreciate, in such a song as *Wie nahte mir der Schlummer*, the fitness of the notes to the words, and the freedom with which she gives utterance to both.

Madame Goldschmidt's performance of Bellini's *Care Compagne* is much more familiar than that of Weber's *Scena*. Those who remember her appearance on the opera stage need not be told that the part of Amina in *La Sonnambula* is that with which she is associated in the minds of the largest number of her admirers. Bellini's air, though in itself less dramatic, suffers more than Weber's from its transplantation to the concert-room. During the performance of the latter, the auditor has time and opportunity to account for, and to enter into, the conflicting emotions of the singer. The song, indeed, is an epitome of the drama to which it belongs. But the former, separated from its antecedents, is simply a burst of joy on the part of one knows not whom, in relation to one knows not what. Holding in much dread the modern purism which would reduce a solo singer to the level of a *ripieno* violinist, we cannot but think Madame Goldschmidt's embellishments of Bellini's air superabundant and out of keeping. Indeed, they belong not so much to the department of embellishment as to the higher region of composition—in which we should prefer to keep company with Bellini, rather than with even Madame Goldschmidt. It is bad enough to treat the graceful solo voice parts of the penultimate Italian school as mere canvases for embroidery; but our Scandinavian vocalist would seem to regard them as necklaces, of which the strings only are to be turned to account, and upon which she can thread jewels of greater weight and intenser lustre than those she thrusts from their places. We have doubts as to the soundness of her judgment in this matter.

Madame Goldschmidt's share in the concert was completed by the performance of a *Bird Song*, by Taubert, and a *Herdsmen's Song*, (founded on a Swedish melody,) by Berg. The former of these was made up, for the most part, of passages of vocalization imitative of that of a "birdling," who, as we gathered from the printed English text, sang "in the forest wide," he knew not why. We strongly suspect that his unconscious execution was very different from the Swedish Nightingale's elaborate imitation of it, and that the feathered songster would have felt equally surprised and flattered by the supposition that there was any resemblance between the two. Like the song of the "birdling," that of the "herdsman" was characterized chiefly by extraneous matter, imitative, it would seem, of a Hyperborean *Ranz des Vaches*; the imitation consisting in the utterance, in one breath, of two successive *shut* notes, (as a horn-player would call them,) produced with such delicacy that the rush of gas through the burners in the room might be heard, and sustained so long as to try the gravity of the audience very severely.

The vocal performance of Madame Goldschmidt was very agreeably relieved by the pianoforte-playing of her husband. M. Otto Goldschmidt was heard in Mendelssohn's *Concerto in G minor*, and in two studies of his own composition. His style is animated, and his execution facile and correct. He possesses also one of the rarest and best of musical gifts—a fine feeling for time; there can never be a moment's doubt as to "what part of a bar he is playing in." He seems, however, wanting both in force and in its correlative, delicacy. In this respect, however, the pianist is so dependent on his instrument and *locale*, that a decision on these points may well wait for another hearing.

Signor F. Lablache sang two songs—Mozart's *Madamina*, and Rossini's *Largo al Factotum*—songs hardly less remarkable for their special fitness for the stage than for the frequency with which they are heard in the concert-room.

The orchestra numbered among its sixty performers all the best of our instrumentalists who were not engaged in the Sacred

Harmonic Society's performance of *Judas Maccabæus* at Exeter Hall. The fact of its being possible to get together, on the same evening, two such bands—bearing in mind, too, that every theatre in London is furnished with its own—says much for the increase of skill in instrumental performance among us. The large portion of the audience who arrived late was played in with Weber's glorious overture to *Oberon*; and the still larger portion who always leave a concert-room at the beginning of the last piece, was played out with Spontini's astonishingly rapid overture to *La Vestale*. Mr. Benedict was the conductor.

THE AMATEUR SOCIETY.

"Charity Concerts" are not often likely to furnish a topic for our columns; unless, indeed, it should happen, some of these days, that we find ourselves tempted to enlighten our readers a little as to the real end and aim of nine-tenths of these entertainments, and the means and appliances which are used in getting them up. The Amateur Society is, however, so completely beyond reproach in these matters, and so interesting an institution in itself, that the performance of the members on Tuesday evening, for the benefit of the Cambridge Asylum for Soldiers' Widows, must not be passed without notice. A programme for such an occasion is not matter for criticism. An audience, not necessarily musical, has to be pleased; and certain pieces must, from patriotic, personal, or local motives, appear in it, the intrinsic merits of which it would be ungracious to discuss. But the concert under consideration was by no means deficient in purely musical interest. The *Symphony in F*, composed some years since for the Society by its present conductor, Mr. Henry Leslie, gave promise of excellence which many subsequent compositions have done much to realize. Its performance formed, on every account, the principal feature in the first part of the concert, to the interest of which the singing of a choir of about forty ladies and gentlemen, who have been practising together under Mr. Leslie's direction, also contributed greatly. A duet for two pianofortes (the arrangement of Mr. Osborne), performed by Mr. S. Waley and a lady who adopts the *nom d'artiste* of Angelina—a pianiste to whom, young as she is, the epithet *promising* has ceased to be appropriate—created a lively sensation of surprise and pleasure among the auditory.

The Amateurs were assisted in their kind undertaking by Mr. Weiss and Miss Dolby, the latter of whom, with artist-like generosity, took the place of Madame Pauer, who was absent from indisposition, at a moment's notice. They did full justice to a very elegant song by Mr. Waley, and more than justice to a very unmeaning one by Donizetti, which probably owed the honour of its introduction on this occasion, not to the composer, but to the poet, whose opening lines happened to involve a touching allusion to the occasion which had called into exercise the skill of the singer:—

Mille volte sul campo d'onor
I perigli più crudel sfidai,
Mille volte la morte sprezzai.

REVIEWS.

MR. JOHN EDMUND READE.*

MR. READE is the author of a great quantity of verse. He thinks himself a poet, and does his best to make the world think so too. The world is obstinate, and will not. What matter? It is the fate of living genius to be neglected, and therefore Mr. Reade complains not. Like Richard Wagner's music, his is the poetry "of the future;" and meanwhile he scatters his unappreciated pearls with a melancholy complacency, secure that the day must come when grateful England, awakening from her stupor, will be proud to pick them from the mire of oblivion, and set them among her crown jewels. Happy faith! Comfortable hope! Win the wreath who may, he, to adopt his own simple language, forgets not

The self-respect of proud humility.

He cherishes no envy, bears no malice. He holds on his way rejoicing, writes, prints, and publishes,—

Chooses his ardent theme, and builds his rhyme,
That he may live a Laureate through all time.

How aptly Mr. Reade here describes his metrical manufacture he is scarcely aware. His "ardent themes" are chosen with the coolest deliberation. His inspiration is laid on as mechanically as the water of his cistern. He gets up the *afflatus* on system, lays the wood and coals for the fire of his enthusiasm, gathers a simile here, a hyperbole there, and flings it on the heap, and when all is ready, takes out his box of lucifers, and in the most methodical manner sets fire to the lumber. The result, to common spectators, is the maximum of smoke, with the minimum of flame. As the blackening clouds ascend, Nature becomes dark before them—the most familiar objects grow dim and lose their form. We rub our eyes, and are fain to rush, coughing and half stifled, from the vapour. No vulgar vapour is it, however, to this Narcissus of song, but the very nimbus of

divinity, reflecting in rainbow tints his own noble image; and still, as his victims retreat, they hear the voice of the bard singing within the fog, in happy contentment. And what a voice! The boom of the bitters is scarcely more melodious—the shriek of the peacock scarcely more majestic.

Mr. Reade is the very chameleon of verse-makers. We can tell to a certainty, from the style of each of his poems, over what author he has last been scrambling. Now it is Byron, now Wordsworth, now Tennyson. But, alas! just as there are vocalists in whose preludings we can with difficulty discern the maimed and distorted fragments of a well-known air, so, in the weird discords of Mr. Reade, we catch painful glimpses of the mangled music of some of these great masters of song. Tennyson, for example, has his *Lilian*, his *Claribel*, his *Isabel*, with their broken irregular lines—not to be numbered among his gems, perhaps, but at least rich in luxuriant fancies and melodious rhythm. Mr. Reade has a *Mariana*, the very counterpart of his Tennysonian prototypes in appearance on the printed page; but there, as might be expected, the resemblance ceases. He gives the broken lines—he does not give the fancy or the melody. Here is a taste!

Mariana!
I see thee treading
On the emerald green;
The wood's skirt its shadow shedding
On thy face; a star is seen
Through filmy flakes its pathway threading.
Blending its faint sheen
With the light of those dark eyes.
Twilight throws its mellowing streak
From behind the crisped edge
Of the trees, and, fading, dies
On thy cheek;
Leaving thee before mine eye
Standing clear against the sky:
Like a spiritual birth
Floating o'er our lowly earth.

A passage to be read not without profound marvel at the skill with which the writer, through sixteen lines, contrives never to deviate either into sense or rhythm. One merit it unquestionably has, that of consistency; for it rises steadily through nonsense into a climax of absurdity. A lady who, while "standing clear against the sky," and, it may be presumed, "upon the emerald green," shall yet "float o'er our lowly earth," is a "spiritual birth" of which Mr. Reade, laying his hand upon his heart, may be "humbly proud"—and one, the honour of whose paternity no poet, living or dead, will venture to dispute with him. But matchless as this passage may be thought, Mr. Reade can surpass himself. Thus he continues:—

Mariana!
Time and scene are changed:
Eden's garden thou hast ranged,
Now in light, and now in shade,
By the spirit's sunshine made,
Which from thee did emanate;
Half its happiness create
From another who is gone:
For the gate is open thrown,
And thou sittest there alone.

We are quite aware that the statements of poets are not to be rigidly scrutinized; but the propositions enunciated in these ten lines are surely both numerous and startling beyond all ordinary licence. To the first no exception can be taken. "Time and scene are changed." That is a comfort. The lady, then, no longer stands "floating o'er our lowly earth," with a star "through filmy flakes its pathway threading," and "blending its faint sheen with the light of those dark eyes." But she, it seems, has "ranged Eden's garden"—rather a strong statement in the face of the last verse of the third chapter of Genesis. And how has she ranged it? "Now in light and now in shade"—natural enough, if not novel. But lo! a surprise awaits us, for the shade in which she ranged is

By the spirit's sunshine made,
Which from thee did emanate:

so that this extraordinary female must have been her own dark lantern, with the bull's-eye obscured. Wordsworth has told us of *The Happy Warrior*, whose high endeavours are

An inward light
That makes the path before him always bright.

The image has been turned in the kaleidoscope of Mr. Reade's imagination, and with the usual happy results. His heroine's "spirit's sunshine" rays out darkness—intermittent darkness, for both light and shade emanate from it. Nor does the wonder stop here. Another constituent of this sunshine was its "happiness," one half of which was "create from another who is gone"—how the other half was "create" is most unfairly left a mystery. But what is this "other," from which the moiety aforesaid was create? Another sunshine, or another spirit? Grammar points to the former solution, bewildered reason to the latter, and in despair snatches a confirmation of its conjecture from the strange "because" of the next line:

For the gate is open thrown,
And thou sittest there alone.

"Sittest there!" exclaims the reader, who by this time feels himself nowhere. Can it be the gate of Eden that is "open thrown?" No doubt it is, for we have heard of no other locality, and Mariana is neither more nor less than an alias for the Peri,

* *Man in Paradise*: a Poem in Six Books, with Lyrical Poems. By John Edmund Reade. London: Longmans. 1856.

who has stood there disconsolate ever since the publication of *Lalla Rookh*.

It was to be expected that a gentleman of Mr. Reade's imitative turn should essay to snatch the lyre of the *Festus* school of poets, and accordingly he has done so. After putting himself through a strong course of *Balder* and *The Mystic* he has condensed the chaotic impressions they have left upon his mind into the leading poem of the volume before us—*Adam in Paradise*. With what judgment is this "ardent theme" chosen? Certain spots on Parnassus are usually deemed sacred from intrusion; and the circle in which Milton has walked might, of all others, have been supposed to need no sign to warn trespassers off its bounds. Mr. Reade, however, obviously claims a right of common upon the sacred hill, and where one great poet has already been is just the place where he thinks himself most free to range. We can even conceive his undertaking to show us Francesca of Rimini, as if no Dante had put a seal upon that theme.

So long as Mr. Reade held by pure models, there was hope for him. But the "devil's wine" of the spasmodic school has fairly turned his brain. His spasms culminate in catalepsy. He has shown there is a point in extravagance even beyond the reach of Dobell and Bailey. And yet, while he has all their absurdity, he has none of their dash. Like them, he tries to play at chuck farthing with the planets, but he goes in with a timid hand. Jupiter will not move, and he only burns his fingers with Saturn. He has caught, too, the trick of his master's profanity, as weak boys in bad company will essay a feeble oath; but it does not sit easily upon him, and the harmless goodness of the man breaks out through the borrowed brimstone. To huddle big words together is Mr. Reade's recipe for a grand style, and when he writes inconceivably bad English, he believes he has attained the pinnacle of sublimity. To be obscure is with him to be profound. Self-contradictory paradoxes are his strongest signs of originality, and when he dons his "garlands and singing robes," he sits, like his own Adam,

Wrapt in thought as in a cloud,
Fitfully opened by the will, to close
Again in mystery.

The Mosaic account of the Creation is too simple and commonplace for his taste. He "hears the wild throes of the elements,"

Triad vitalities, air, water, fire,
Struggling to formative life;

and makes the wildest work with sun, moon, and stars, and every created thing in earth and heaven. He has such visions as no other eye ever beheld, as when he tells us—

I saw
Before me opening the limitless,
The starred inane, the waste and void of space,
Where time and bound are not; to furthest ken
Living with infinite hosts of spirit shapes,
Cycling, or scattered, forms of shadowless flame,
Clustering or denser like the star galaxies.

A gentleman who sees crowded vacancy is a natural curiosity. There are no doubt people who think this style of bombast fine, but even they would have a smile of pity for the author, were he to descend from his "star galaxies," and write of familiar things in the same strain; as thus—

I saw
Before me glooming Willis' spacious rooms,
A void, obscured by myriad jets of gas,
Where light and heat are not; to farthest ken
Living with infinite hosts of dancing shapes,
Cycling or scattered, blooming or moustached,
Clustering or denser around the iced champagne.

Mr. Reade's picture of creation is like the nightmare dream of a geologist, after depositing in his interior, at a British Association dinner, stratum after stratum of the most indigestible viands. The planet's career is a sort of witches' dance through his lines, with the comets cutting in and out among them like so many Highlanders in a delirious reel. Fire, water, zoophytes, and polypi, volcanoes and megatheria, come tumbling over each other in most admired disorder. "Giant Saurians hiss through the fervid empyrean"—"Plesiosaurs oar through beds fluvialile"—"Pterodactyls armed with javelin wings," and "scale-gleaming bands of Cephalaspides," all tilt at one another—

One chase
Of life from death, pursuing and pursued,
Attuned to cries of fear, rage, agony.

In the hurlyburly, Mr. Reade's limited knowledge of Lindley Murray forsakes him, and we read, how

Scaled monsters leaped from depths, to find on shore
The fate they flew.

Mammoth and Mastodon "trend thunder," as though the soil were charged with detonating powder. Behemoth crushes miles of forest at every step; and "the megatheria" tosses about "deracinate" pine-trees with its horn, as a frisky cow tumbles a hay-cock. In this strange world, everything is the reverse of what it is in our own. Silence is loud—noise is inaudible—the visible is not to be seen. We read of

Stillness, whose bosom throbb'd pervading sound;

and again of

Harmonious sounds
That create stillness, as a presence felt
On the hush'd heart.

We are told of

The flowing on of brooks inaudible
To the wild flowers reflected in their eyes;

And in another place, how

Forms palpable of aching radiance
Resolve again to their fine element.

But the most incomprehensible of all Mr. Reade's visions is the following:—

On that throne
One sat, absorbing vision which he gave,
Till round the central of that orb intense
Darkness suffusing rolled; all else unscen
Were shadows, glory emanate from him.

We had hoped, when "the throes of the elements" were over, to have found some solace for our pangs in the picture of Paradise. But alas! the change is from bad to worse. Mr. Reade's Paradise is a place not to mourn for; and his Adam and Eve are— but no, we have not the cruelty to inflict upon our readers any account of these unhappy beings. A dreary pair they are, who, throughout three books, talk bad metaphysics, like a couple of young Scotch students of divinity. Of Mr. Reade's theology we shall only say that he is likely to stand alone in thinking that his views "do not diverge beyond the limits of scriptural doctrine." There is no temptation in his Paradise, and no fall. Adam is born a sceptic, a sort of imbecile Comte, "who diseases thought with doubt," suffers horribly from the ennui of unbroken happiness, and abandons Paradise in search of new sensations. Such, at least, if Mr. Reade's words have any meaning at all, is what we gather from them. "The true Paradise," says the Argument of his Sixth Book, "is repose earned by effort." There was no scope for effort in Paradise, and therefore Adam left it. Apparently, the supplies, too, had begun to fail, and the primeval pair to have some apprehension of being starved out. Mr. Reade's notion of evil is not that it is sin, or transgression against a law prescribed by Heaven, but merely physical privation. So

To prevent evil, which is bodily want,
By work and provident faculty,

our first parents spontaneously went forth from Eden to earn a livelihood by toil, in a world which Mr. Reade presents in no very inviting colours—as

— gloomier regions opening afar,
Dark, waste, and wild, and gloomily revealed
By lightnings.

There has been no sin, no curse, no expulsion, no cherubim with a flaming sword which turns every way to keep the way of the Tree of Life. Adam's last words are—

We will not, Eve, be driven
From these loved haunts, but willingly depart.
Henceforth our human joys are magnified;
Feeling their worth, our sorrows sweeter shared.

Yet Mr. Reade assures us that his poem "does not diverge beyond the limits of scriptural doctrine!"

Were it likely to be of any avail, we would urge Mr. Reade to reconsider his vocation. He has for many years been labouring hard to get from the world a hearing for his verses, but with no great success. In one of the minor poems of this volume, *Despondency Reproved*, we find a feeling of disappointment expressed as only he can express it—a line of Shakspeare being, with characteristic inaccuracy, misquoted by the way:—

And when I see the goal of my high hope
Unreach'd, far off, and gathering clouds o'ercast
The star that, lustreless, wanes o'er my ken,
Verily by the roadside I could sit,
"Envyng at this man's reach and that man's scope,"
And feeling for this rude, rough life unfit,
My wayward lot repine.

But when, in the next page, we read the grounds of reassurance which the desponding metrist finds for himself, we see how hopeless is his case. In his very rejection by the multitude he finds an earnest of the divinity of his gifts. He is not "the poet of familiar talk—the echo of the many." His "thought-woven songs" are only for the initiated:—

He is a prophet, preaching from the shrine
Of God-inspired poetry.

Alas! that the prophet should not know something of the first rules of prosody!

MILNER'S RUSSIA.*

THE history of this publication is briefly told in its preface. We there learn that the author is an occasional contributor to a periodical called the *Leisure Hour*, and that in the compiled he published the *Tragedy of the Princess Tanakowsky*, Lyell, from the materials he found in the works of Caster, Tana-Bell, and Krasinski. The lamentable story of the Princess Tanakoff, Countess Orloff, though sufficiently known to the rest of the world, was doubtless a novelty to the readers of the *Leisure Hour*. The author's ambition, keeping pace with his success, prompted him to extend his compilations and the result is a volume of five hundred pages octavo, called *Rise, Progress, Tragedies, and Revolutions of Russia*; followed by another

* *Russia. Its Rise and Progress, Tragedies, and Revolutions*. By the Rev. Thomas Milner, M.A., F.R.G.S. L.

Harmonic Society's performance of *Judas Maccabeus* at Exeter Hall. The fact of its being possible to get together, on the same evening, two such bands—bearing in mind, too, that every theatre in London is furnished with its own—says much for the increase of skill in instrumental performance among us. The large portion of the audience who arrived late was played in with Weber's glorious overture to *Oberon*; and the still larger portion who always leave a concert-room at the beginning of the last piece, was played out with Spontini's astonishingly rapid overture to *La Vestale*. Mr. Benedict was the conductor.

THE AMATEUR SOCIETY.

"Charity Concerts" are not often likely to furnish a topic for our columns; unless, indeed, it should happen, some of these days, that we find ourselves tempted to enlighten our readers a little as to the real end and aim of nine-tenths of these entertainments, and the means and appliances which are used in getting them up. The Amateur Society is, however, so completely beyond reproach in these matters, and so interesting an institution in itself, that the performance of the members on Tuesday evening, for the benefit of the Cambridge Asylum for Soldiers' Widows, must not be passed without notice. A programme for such an occasion is not matter for criticism. An audience, not necessarily musical, has to be pleased; and certain pieces must, from patriotic, personal, or local motives, appear in it, the intrinsic merits of which it would be ungracious to discuss. But the concert under consideration was by no means deficient in purely musical interest. The *Symphony in F*, composed some years since for the Society by its present conductor, Mr. Henry Leslie, gave promise of excellence which many subsequent compositions have done much to realize. Its performance formed, on every account, the principal feature in the first part of the concert, to the interest of which the singing of a choir of about forty ladies and gentlemen, who have been practising together under Mr. Leslie's direction, also contributed greatly. A duet for two pianofortes (the arrangement of Mr. Osborne), performed by Mr. S. Waley and a lady who adopts the *nom d'artiste* of Angelina—a pianiste to whom, young as she is, the epithet *promising* has ceased to be appropriate—created a lively sensation of surprise and pleasure among the auditory.

The Amateurs were assisted in their kind undertaking by Mr. Weiss and Miss Dolby, the latter of whom, with artist-like generosity, took the place of Madame Pauer, who was absent from indisposition, at a moment's notice. They did full justice to a very elegant song by Mr. Waley, and more than justice to a very unmeaning one by Donizetti, which probably owed the honour of its introduction on this occasion, not to the composer, but to the poet, whose opening lines happened to involve a touching allusion to the occasion which had called into exercise the skill of the singer:—

Mille volte sul campo d'onor
I perigli più crudel sfidai,
Mille volte la morte sprezzai.

REVIEWS.

MR. JOHN EDMUND READE.*

MR. READE is the author of a great quantity of verse. He thinks himself a poet, and does his best to make the world think so too. The world is obstinate, and will not. What matter? It is the fate of living genius to be neglected, and therefore Mr. Reade complains not. Like Richard Wagner's music, his is the poetry "of the future;" and meanwhile he scatters his unappreciated pearls with a melancholy complacency, secure that the day must come when grateful England, awakening from her stupor, will be proud to pick them from the mire of oblivion, and set them among her crown jewels. Happy faith! Comfortable hope! Win the wreath who may, he, to adopt his own simple language, forgets not

The self-respect of proud humility.

He cherishes no envy, bears no malice. He holds on his way rejoicing, writes, prints, and publishes,—

Chooses his ardent theme, and builds his rhyme,
That he may live a Laureate through all time.

How aptly Mr. Reade here describes his metrical manufacture he is scarcely aware. His "ardent themes" are chosen with the coolest deliberation. His inspiration is laid on as mechanically as the water of his cistern. He gets up the *affatus* on system, lays the wood and coals for the fire of his enthusiasm, gathers a simile here, a hyperbole there, and flings it on the heap, and when all is ready, takes out his box of lucifers, and in the most methodical manner sets fire to the lumber. The result, to common spectators, is the maximum of smoke, with the minimum of flame. As the blackening clouds ascend, Nature becomes dark before them—the most familiar objects grow dim and lose their form. We rub our eyes, and are fain to rush, coughing and half stifled, from the vapour. No vulgar vapour is it, however, to this Narcissus of song, but the very nimbus of

divinity, reflecting in rainbow tints his own noble image; and still, as his victims retreat, they hear the voice of the bard singing within the fog, in happy contentment. And what a voice! The boom of the bittorn is scarcely more melodious—the shriek of the peacock scarcely more majestic.

Mr. Reade is the very chameleon of verse-makers. We can tell to a certainty, from the style of each of his poems, over what author he has last been scrambling. Now it is Byron, now Wordsworth, now Tennyson. But, alas! just as there are vocalists in whose preludings we can with difficulty discern the maimed and distorted fragments of a well-known air, so, in the weird discords of Mr. Reade, we catch painful glimpses of the mangled music of some of these great masters of song. Tennyson, for example, has his *Lilian*, his *Claribel*, his *Isabel*, with their broken irregular lines—not to be numbered among his gems, perhaps, but at least rich in luxuriant fancies and melodious rhythm. Mr. Reade has a *Mariana*, the very counterpart of his Tennysonian prototypes in appearance on the printed page; but there, as might be expected, the resemblance ceases. He gives the broken lines—he does not give the fancy or the melody. Here is a taste!

Mariana!
I see thee treading
On the emerald green;
The wood's skirt its shadow shedding
On thy face; a star is seen
Through filmy flakes its pathway threading.
Blending its faint sheen
With the light of those dark eyes.
Twilight throws its mellowing streak
From behind the crisped edge
Of the trees, and, fading, dies
On thy cheek;
Leaving thee before mine eye
Standing clear against the sky:
Like a spiritual birth
Floating o'er our lowly earth.

A passage to be read not without profound marvel at the skill with which the writer, through sixteen lines, contrives never to deviate either into sense or rhythm. One merit it unquestionably has, that of consistency; for it rises steadily through nonsense into a climax of absurdity. A lady who, while "standing clear against the sky," and, it may be presumed, "upon the emerald green," shall yet "float o'er our lowly earth," is a "spiritual birth" of which Mr. Reade, laying his hand upon his heart, may be "humbly proud"—and one, the honour of whose paternity no poet, living or dead, will venture to dispute with him. But matchless as this passage may be thought, Mr. Reade can surpass himself. Thus he continues:—

Mariana!
Time and scene are changed:
Eden's garden thou hast ranged,
Now in light, and now in shade,
By the spirit's sunshine made,
Which from thee did emanate;
Half its happiness create
From another who is gone:
For the gate is open thrown,
And thou sittest there alone.

We are quite aware that the statements of poets are not to be rigidly scrutinized; but the propositions enunciated in these ten lines are surely both numerous and startling beyond all ordinary licence. To the first no exception can be taken. "Time and scene are changed." That is a comfort. The lady, then, no longer stands "floating o'er our lowly earth," with a star "through filmy flakes its pathway threading," and "blending its faint sheen with the light of those dark eyes." But she, it seems, has "ranged Eden's garden"—rather a strong statement in the face of the last verse of the third chapter of Genesis. And how has she ranged it? "Now in light and now in shade"—natural enough, if not novel. But lo! a surprise awaits us, for the shade in which she ranged is

By the spirit's sunshine made,
Which from thee did emanate;

so that this extraordinary female must have been her own dark lantern, with the bull's-eye obscured. Wordsworth has told us of *The Happy Warrior*, whose high endeavours are

An inward light
That makes the path before him always bright.

The image has been turned in the kaleidoscope of Mr. Reade's imagination, and with the usual happy results. His heroine's "spirit's sunshine" rays out darkness—intermittent darkness, for both light and shade emanate from it. Nor does the wonder stop here. Another constituent of this sunshine was its "happiness," one half of which was "create from another who is gone"—how the other half was "create" is most unfairly left a mystery. But what is this "other," from which the moiety aforesaid was create? Another sunshine, or another spirit? Grammar points to the former solution, bewildered reason to the latter, and in despair snatches a confirmation of its conjecture from the strange "because" of the next line:

For the gate is open thrown,
And thou sittest there alone.

"Sittest there!" exclaims the reader, who by this time feels himself nowhere. Can it be the gate of Eden that is "open thrown?" No doubt it is, for we have heard of no other locality, and Mariana is neither more nor less than an alias for the Peri,

* *Man in Paradise*: a Poem in Six Books, with Lyrical Poems. By John Edmund Reade. London: Longmans. 1856.

who has stood there disconsolate ever since the publication of *Lalla Rookh*.

It was to be expected that a gentleman of Mr. Reade's imitative turn should essay to snatch the lyre of the *Festus* school of poets, and accordingly he has done so. After putting himself through a strong course of *Balder* and *The Mystic* he has condensed the chaotic impressions they have left upon his mind into the leading poem of the volume before us—*Adam in Paradise*. With what judgment is this "ardent theme" chosen? Certain spots on Parnassus are usually deemed sacred from intrusion; and the circle in which Milton has walked might, of all others, have been supposed to need no sign to warn trespassers off its bounds. Mr. Reade, however, obviously claims a right of common upon the sacred hill, and where one great poet has already been is just the place where he thinks himself most free to range. We can even conceive his undertaking to show us Francesca of Rimini, as if no Dante had put a seal upon that theme.

So long as Mr. Reade held by pure models, there was hope for him. But the "devil's wine" of the spasmodic school has fairly turned his brain. His spasms culminate in catalepsy. He has shown there is a point in extravagance even beyond the reach of Dobell and Bailey. And yet, while he has all their absurdity, he has none of their dash. Like them, he tries to play at chuck farthing with the planets, but he goes in with a timid hand. Jupiter will not move, and he only burns his fingers with Saturn. He has caught, too, the trick of his master's profanity, as weak boys in bad company will essay a feeble oath; but it does not sit easily upon him, and the harmless goodness of the man breaks out through the borrowed brimstone. To huddle big words together is Mr. Reade's recipe for a grand style, and when he writes inconceivably bad English, he believes he has attained the pinnacle of sublimity. To be obscure is with him to be profound. Self-contradictory paradoxes are his strongest signs of originality, and when he dons his "garlands and singing robes," he sits, like his own Adam,

Wrapt in thought as in a cloud,
Fitfully opened by the will, to close
Again in mystery.

The Mosaic account of the Creation is too simple and commonplace for his taste. He "hears the wild throes of the elements,"

Triad vitalities, air, water, fire,
Struggling to formative life;

and makes the wildest work with sun, moon, and stars, and every created thing in earth and heaven. He has such visions as no other eye ever beheld, as when he tells us—

I saw
Before me opening the limitless,
The starred inane, the waste and void of space,
Where time and bound are not; to furthest ken
Living with infinite hosts of spirit shapes,
Cycling, or scattered, forms of shadowless flame,
Clustering or denser like the star galaxies.

A gentleman who sees crowded vacancy is a natural curiosity. There are no doubt people who think this style of bombast fine, but even they would have a smile of pity for the author, were he to descend from his "star galaxies," and write of familiar things in the same strain; as thus—

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Were it likely to be of any avail, we would urge Mr. Reade to reconsider his vocation. He has for many years been labouring hard to get from the world a hearing for his verses, but with no great success. In one of the minor poems of this volume, *Dependancy Reproved*, we find a feeling of disappointment expressed as only he can express it—a line of Shakespeare being, with characteristic inaccuracy, misquoted by the way:—

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Alas! that the prophet should not know something of the first rules of prosody!

MILNER'S RUSSIA.*

THE history of this publication is briefly told in its Preface. We there learn that the author is an occasional contributor to a periodical called the *Leisure Hour*, and that in that periodical he published the *Tragedy of the Princess Tanakanoff*, compiled from the materials he found in the works of Castella, Fooks, Lyell, Bell, and Krasinski. The lamentable story of the Princess Tanakanoff, Countess Orloff, though sufficiently known to the rest of the world, was doubtless a novelty to the readers of the *Leisure Hour*. The author's ambition, keeping pace with his success, prompted him to extend his compilations, and the result is a volume of five hundred pages octavo, on the Rise, Progress, Tragedies, and Revolutions of Russia; to be followed by another

* Russia. Its Rise and Progress, Tragedies and Revolutions. By the Rev. Thomas Milner, M.A., F.R.G.S. London. Longmans.

volume, *Nicholas and the Caucasus*, in which the author proposes to notice the reign of the late Czar. This second volume will, in his opinion, complete a general view of the history and policy of Russia.

What Mr. Milner's *Nicholas and the Caucasus* will be like, it is not difficult to divine. The vulgar familiarity of the title chosen for the performance gives a clue to the vices which we may expect to find in its composition. The book now before us is doubtless a fair sample of the author's powers; and its merits are such that, for Mr. Milner's sake, as well as our own, we sincerely wish that it could be passed over in silence. We are loth to inflict pain upon a man who, for aught we know to the contrary, may be industrious, well-meaning, and respectable, by criticising a performance which must have cost him a great deal of labour in the mere mechanical act of writing, and which he probably regards with that tender and touching affection which parents are wont to feel for their deformed, crippled, or imbecile children. But book-making on the war is carried to such lengths that it is high time an example should be made of some of the more conspicuous offenders. Such a one is the Reverend Thomas Milner, a Master of Arts, and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. When such a man attempts to write history at all, he is bound to do more than compile from the works, and transcribe the statements, of half-a-dozen historians and writers of memoirs, whose works, of very recent date, are in everybody's hands; and, if a compilation be wanted, he is bound to make it compendious. Above all things, he is bound to avoid vulgarisms and loose and ungrammatical diction. Such faults, pardonable in the *Leisure Hour*, call for the severest censure when perpetrated by a divine, a Member of a University, and a Fellow of the Geographical Society. *Noblesse oblige*, and the least that can be expected in such a work is that it should be free from faults of style and phraseology which would be censurable even in a schoolboy.

To support our charges under this last head, we might quote the whole of Mr. Milner's book. That he writes with ease and fluency may be seen at a glance, but the same glance will also show the vices of his style. He delights in strong epithets, and is never at a loss for an abusive adjective; while the simplest phrases are made unintelligible by inextricable labyrinths of pronouns. In his Preface, Mr. Milner tells us that it is his intention "to give a general view of the fortunes of the empire and of the more remarkable chapters." We confess we have not been able to divine the meaning of this appended fragment of a sentence. Without attempting to unravel the mystery, we proceed to quote other sentences equally bad, though not altogether unintelligible:—"When his plans were matured, he sent to them an ambassador." (p. 43). "The reduction of the neighbouring Russian states was a work of difficulty and time, especially in the case of Novgorod, extending over a series of years." Ibid. "He made no victims owing to the revolt." Mr. Milner does not here mean that the prince of whom he speaks was restrained by a rebellion—the import of this strange phrase is, that Ivan, the potentate in question, did not punish any one for the revolt. But to proceed:—"It (viz. Ivan's Code) allowed to the peasants the privilege of passing from one village to another at a stated annual period, or of changing their lords, the subsequent abolition of which converted them into slaves." (p. 53). "When the Metropolitan upon her arrival, weeping and sobbing, cut off her hair, &c." It was Mr. Milner's intention to represent the lady as weeping and sobbing, not the priest, as is implied by the phrase. Of Ivan IV., our author tells us, rather confusedly,—"This boy survived a stormy pupilage to confirm the power of his country and extend its limits, then becoming its scourge and curse." Another phrase relating to the same prince is unsurpassable for indignant terseness:—"Dastardly prostration formed the reply which Ivan returned to a challenge sent to him by the King of Poland."

Next, in page 78, we learn that a certain courtier "was an unprincipled knave, horribly punished, being detected in a political intrigue;" and two pages further, we meet with the startling announcement, that "the printing press was introduced to Moscow." In another place, the occurrence of events is mentioned as the "transpiring of events." Of course, this fine writing finds its level in corresponding vulgarisms. Mr. Milner has a dangerous inclination to describe persons as "*parties*," and to cloak over the disagreeable idea of homicide by the word "*to despatch*." Thus, we read, "Prince Ghinski, the party who instigated this overthrow of a rival." (p. 60.) "Kuritzin was burned on the stake, while many obscure *parties* had their tongues cut out." (p. 136.) Most delightfully is this word used in a sentence which appears to us an attempt at a free and familiar translation of Schiller's—

Das aber ist der Fluch der bösen That,
Dass sie fortzeugend Böses muss gebären.

Let our readers judge for themselves:—"Thus," says the Rev. Thomas Milner, "crime begets crime, and while a great injustice perpetrated by men in a high social position is often visited upon innocent, corresponding *parties*, the retaliation is generally more terrible than the injury." (p. 154.) Again, (p. 171.) "Apprised of his peril by some repentant *parties*." As for the appropriate use made of the verb "*to despatch*," we gather the following sentences from a choice collection to be found in Mr. Milner's book:—"As Yermek was conducting hostilities in Siberia, it is likely that the Samojedes believed the shipwrecked strangers to be in alliance with him, and hence *despatched* them." (p. 98.)

"Ill-used wives, driven to desperation, frequently *despatched* their husbands." (p. 191.) "In the case of the wife *despatching* her husband, she was buried alive." (Ib.) "The two boys of the Governor were *despatched*." (p. 154.) The following sentences are further specimens of the delightful *chiaroscuro* in which Mr. Milner manages to wrap his meaning:—

The ecclesiastical chief rode on horseback, holding a cross of gold in his right hand, embellished with a profusion of diamonds. (p. 131.)

Bitter experience of unbridled despotism had in some measure rectified the national understanding as to its divine right, and wrought a conviction of its intrinsic demerit. (p. 148.)

The Czar did not accept of his new subjects without much hesitation, as it necessarily involved a war with Poland. (p. 148.)

In reviewing his career, it is impossible to avoid the expression of admiration at his superiority to natural prejudices, large views, and invincible pertinacity, while feelings of disgust, &c. (p. 170.)

Mock-sieges and sham-fights were appointed to exercise the troops, some of which, for want of soldierly discipline, degenerated into scenes of brawl and downright battle. (p. 173.)

At the age of eighteen, Charles XII. had as yet displayed no capacity for business or military predilections.

Capacity for military predilections! The following is a graphic description of one of the Czar Peter's orgies:—"Fighting was grafted upon shouting, and they exchanged bloody evidences of pugilism." (p. 213.) These bloody evidences of pugilism, and the description of the procession of the fool's Pope, rouse the indignation of the Rev. Mr. Milner, which vents itself in commonplace to the following effect:—"Exhibitions of this kind illustrate the depraved taste of their designer, his utter ignorance of the essential principles of civilization, and incapacity to act the part of the true father of his country."

It appears, by Mr. Milner's account, that a Cossack Chief made a journey, entered a citadel, and was executed after he had been quartered. These are his own words: "Stenko.... entered the city, and was executed in the citadel, having been quartered on the 6th of June, 1671." We beg also to invite special attention to the account of Bishop Burnet's experiences:—

It was the singular fortune of Bishop Burnet to converse with a Rochester on his death-bed, hear some of the last words of a Russell before he went to the scaffold, and hold free discourse with a Muscovite monarch through the medium of interpreters, intent upon studying the arts of civilized life.

It stands to reason, that a free conversation through the medium of interpreters who are intent upon studying the arts of civilized life, cannot fail to be most interesting. A couple of chapters back, there is an account of the fears of Prince Matveof when the Czar Alexis offered to marry the said Matveof's niece,—

He (viz. Matveof) stated that he had already a sufficient number of enemies at Court who witnessed with envious eyes the favour he enjoyed; and that the great noble families would be intensely mortified, if he (Matveof?) wedded a comparatively humble girl.

We believe we have sufficiently multiplied quotations from Mr. Milner's book to justify the censure we have been compelled to pass on his style. Even if this work were more than a compilation—if the author had enriched it with the contents of books not within everybody's reach—if, as the result of laborious research in public and private libraries and collections of MSS., he had given us new facts, or thrown light on disputed questions—the barbarism of the style, its vulgarisms, its alternate tameness and bombast, would still arrest our attention; though we should be willing to excuse these blemishes in a student whose ambition is to collect new matter, rather than to fashion the old. But Mr. Milner has no claim to such indulgence. A man who simply goes over ground which others have trodden before him—who merely reproduces the statements of works within the reach of every educated person—can claim no merits except those of style and treatment; and if these are wanting, what can the critic say? Mr. Milner has neither condensed, nor simplified, nor adorned the subject of Russian history. To judge from the volume before us, his work, when complete, will be neither shorter, nor more interesting, nor cheaper than the number of good histories of Russia which are already extant; while his style is inferior to that of all his predecessors. To borrow his own exquisite phraseology, "Performances of this kind illustrate the coarse tastes of their designer, his utter ignorance of the essential principles of composition, and incapacity to act the part of a historian."

MR. GILBERT ON THE BANK CHARTER ACT.

IN our recent notice of Mr. Gilbert's "Practical Treatise on Banking," we promised to examine his arguments against the policy of the Bank Charter Act of 1844. On entering upon this discussion, we must in the first place express our extreme surprise that, in a book which professes to have a practical character, and to base its conclusions upon facts, no attempt should be made to trace the working of the Bank Act during the eventful and varied years which have followed the commercial disasters of 1847. For surely, even if Mr. Gilbert's representation of the history of that year were far more correct than we think it is, there can still be little doubt that subsequent occurrences must largely qualify his conclusions. He says that "experience is the only test of the soundness of a theory," and then proceeds to decide a question of present and vital interest, by minutely recapitulating the events of the three years after the passing of the Act, and bestowing only a single foot-note upon all that has occurred in the eight years

following. It may undoubtedly be answered that the two chapters we are about to criticise were originally published in 1849, and that there is now before us merely a reprint of them. But to this we reply, that the new edition of the work is evidently intended to bear upon the question of now maintaining the principle of the Act; and therefore, knowing as we do Mr. Gilbert's energy, we feel justified in assuming that he shrinks from grappling with facts only because he is well convinced that they would prove too strong for him. Let us see, however, what sort of case he can construct out of the imperfect history which he has given us.

In the first place, he accuses the Act "of having produced an abundance of money and a low rate of interest, and thus of having stimulated to excessive speculation." According to the Act, the Bank is bound to issue notes in exchange for gold bullion at the rate of 3*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.* per ounce. When, therefore, the foreign exchanges are favourable to the importation of the precious metals, "this gold, consisting of gold bars and foreign gold coin, which could not be used as money in this country, is taken to the issue department, and instantly converted into Bank of England notes." Now on this we have to observe that, before the passing of the Act, the Bank always issued its notes in exchange for gold; and thus, the practice having been the same, it can make no difference whether it depended upon statute or upon the conviction of the Directors of its expediency. And if the Bank did not thus issue notes, what does Mr. Gilbert suppose would be the consequence? He surely, being a practical man, must know very well that gold would not come into this country unless a demand existed for it; and that, when the demand exists, the holders of the commodity will in some way contrive to meet it. If there were no Bank of England with exclusive privileges, we should have goldsmiths, as in former times, issuing their notes upon the deposit of bullion—or the gold would be sent to the Mint to be coined—or, if that process were too tardy, it would pass from hand to hand in bars. An Australian digger does not seek gold merely for the pleasure of looking at it, but to make a profit, and with that view he sends the produce of his toil to Europe, and to England, if the rate of interest here is higher than on the Continent. It has been thought a modern improvement to do business with bank notes instead of ingots, but Mr. Gilbert, it seems, would return to the cumbrous method of barbarians. We wonder he does not advocate the Spartan use of a more bulky metal, iron, in order to hamper speculators more completely. To say that, by this practice of issuing notes in exchange for gold, "the amount of notes is increased beyond what the transactions of the country require," is to set at naught, in blind hostility to the Act, the simplest principles of political economy. Gold comes into this country because, whether prudently or not, we happen to be offering for it better terms than can be got elsewhere. When this is not the case, it will either not be brought here at all, or will be sent abroad directly, as Mr. Gilbert might have learned from the transactions of the last six months, if he had chosen to advert to them in his new edition. But, indeed, the perverseness of our monetary sagas is quite wonderful. Are notes to be issued at all? and, if so, what shall regulate the amount? The Bank Act answers this question in the only rational manner, by ordaining that they shall not be issued, beyond a certain limit, except in exchange for gold, which we know can only be had by paying for it. No doubt this security is not absolutely perfect, because, in our national eagerness for speculation, we are apt to offer to the holders of bullion better terms than they can obtain elsewhere. But what would be the result of the same tendency if no check whatever were interposed? The evil which may temporarily, and in a moderate degree, arise in spite—and not, as Mr. Gilbert pretends, in consequence—of the Act, would, if no such Act existed, become uncontrollable.

Another charge against the Act is, "that it does not admit of those occasional expansions of the amount of notes in circulation which are often required by the domestic transactions of the country." But does Mr. Gilbert really mean to say that every speculation in which Englishmen may think fit to engage at home is to be sustained by issues of paper money without stint? If he does, we must class him with those "inconvertible" men of Birmingham upon whom every argument would be thrown away. But probably he would deny that this is his meaning, because he appears to admit the necessity of maintaining, at least in theory, the convertibility of the bank note. If, however, he pretends that notes may be issued without limit whenever "the domestic transactions of the country" require it, and that still cash payments can be tolerably secure, we have only to say that the history of the years from 1810 to 1844 teaches the contrary with terrible distinctness. Mr. Gilbert complains that, in the beginning of 1846, some difficulty was feared as a consequence of the Act, in making the deposit of ten per cent. upon the capital of the projected railways. These deposits nevertheless were actually made in London, to the enormous amount of fourteen millions. They could, however, be only made in gold or notes of the Bank of England; and since, under the Act, notes represented gold, mere adventurers without capital could not easily find the means of paying their deposits. In this way, therefore, a partial check was put upon railway speculation; but if these "domestic transactions" could have been facilitated at will by an "expansion of the notes in circulation," there is really no saying when or where they would have stopped. Most people now think

that, even under the embarrassment of a restricted currency, railway speculation has been carried much too far; but Mr. Gilbert appears to hold that we ought to have had many more unproductive and useless lines. It was, of course, very difficult to tell how the fourteen millions of bank notes could be forthcoming; and so our author would have made everything smooth by a creation of paper money to that amount. But why stop at fourteen millions? Were there not many other "domestic transactions" which would have had an equal claim to enjoy the same facilities? Was the Bank of England to issue twenty millions or more of paper upon the faith that the need was temporary, and that no harm could be occasioned by supplying it? And again, in April, 1847, when upwards of two millions of gold was taken from the Bank to pay for foreign corn, and an equal amount of notes was thereby withdrawn from circulation, ought the Bank then to have issued paper to fill the void, in the hope that the gold would soon return? There can be no assurance that such a claim will be only temporary. We should be sorry to be in the position of a customer of Mr. Gilbert's who was endeavouring to pass off upon him such flimsy pretences as he thinks ought to have satisfied the Bank of England. If he regrets the system which existed previously to 1844, when "the circulation of the country parts of England expanded or contracted as required by the wants of the public"—if he thinks that, whenever bills of exchange are discredited, bank notes should be forthcoming, to obviate the pressure thus created—he is virtually, though not avowedly, a partisan of unlimited, and, therefore, inconvertible paper issues; and he is reiterating fallacies which we will not weary our readers by exposing for the thousandth time.

There yet remain many other pernicious errors in this chapter of the work before us, which want of space forbids us to expose. To prove, however, that Mr. Gilbert cannot reason soundly would not go far to evince the soundness of the reasons upon which the Act was based. We prefer, therefore, to direct attention to some advice given to the Joint Stock Banks by our author, in 1844, and republished at p. 119 of his first volume. We think it will be felt that, by pointing out "at the passing of the Act, the course which he thought prudent bankers ought to pursue," he has furnished the strongest possible demonstration of the wisdom of the very measure which he so perseveringly impugns. "The evils arising from a scarcity of money can only be avoided by following a prudent line of conduct when money is abundant." What is this but the very lesson which the promoters of the Act have always striven to teach, and which, when gentler methods failed, the Act was passed to enforce? And if, on the eve of its becoming law, we find Mr. Gilbert urging his brethren to take the very course to which the Act was meant to lead them, he has certainly provided us with the most decisive of all arguments against himself. The Bank of England, he says, will no longer be able to assist everybody, and therefore, henceforward, "we must conduct our banks, individually, on a principle of self-dependence." If this advice had been generally taken, the Joint Stock Banks which failed in 1847 would have stood, and the greater part of the disasters of that year would have been avoided. But Mr. Gilbert's warning, though neglected when he uttered it, has in later times found the acceptance it deserved. If it suited the main argument of the writer, he might have appealed to the experience of the last two years, as proving that the salutary principles of banking inculcated by himself have been forced upon the attention of less wise and cautious managers by the stringency of the law which he denounces. We say confidently that the Act worked, on the whole, beneficially in 1847, and that it has worked beneficially under the heavy export of gold caused by the war; and it will become yearly more valuable, as bankers learn more and more to govern themselves by it, and to practise invariably those sound rules of business which Mr. Gilbert inculcates with the authority of his experience, and which Sir Robert Peel sought by his legislation to enforce. When our author urges that "the most effectual way of acquiring this self-dependence that we have been recommending is to call up an adequate amount of capital," he is doing the very work of those to whom professedly he is most opposed. This is the very principle which distinguishes sound from unsound banking, and every body knows that the failure of joint-stock banks, and the wide-spread ruin they have caused, were due to the attempt to carry them on by means of re-discounting and other expedients for supplying the original want of "an adequate amount of capital." But then, "if we increase our capitals to the full extent that may be required in seasons of pressure, we must not expect to pay high dividends." Here, again, is good practical advice, which comes so seasonably that we can forgive the false theory to which it is appended. The maxim that those public companies which pay the highest dividends are not necessarily the best conducted, is even now but imperfectly impressed upon the minds of the majority of shareholders.

Innumerable passages in Mr. Gilbert's book lead to the same conclusion, that, from the Bank of England or some other source, paper money ought, in his opinion, to be always forthcoming to answer everybody's "temporary" necessities. But the wants of a borrower, as we need hardly tell a professional lender, are always, according to himself, "temporary." If Mr. Gilbert is right in arguing that the demand for gold to pay for foreign corn in April, 1847, ought to have been met by a "temporary" issue of bank notes, the very same argument will apply to every

exportation of bullion during the war, and particularly to the events of the last six months. Of late there has been a good deal of monetary pressure. The Act did not cause this pressure, but it prevented ineffectual and dangerous expedients being employed to avert what is in the nature of things inevitable. If Mr. Gilbert would have resorted to such expedients, he is, however he may deny it, an advocate for the suspension of cash payments. No doubt he would repudiate such an intention; and yet he fails to indicate any principle which is to govern the currency of the country when that of Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Goulburn shall be set aside. It is true that he does, in one passage, recommend that the principle of "competing issues," as practised in Scotland, shall be adopted. But to this the answer is, that we had enough and far too much of "competing issues" in the years preceding 1844. Banking, "as practised in Scotland," has usually been, compared with English banking, prudent; but nevertheless we hold the restraint imposed on the Scotch bankers in 1845 to have been necessary, and it differs only in degree, and not in principle, from the English law enacted in 1844. We decline to discuss what Mr. Gilbert calls "the antagonist principle," that "the amount of the domestic currency shall be wholly unaffected by the importations or exportations of bullion," because, until he has further explained his meaning, we must hold that he is proposing an impossibility. But let him not be induced by us to enter upon any further exposition of his theories, either economical or moral. On the contrary, let him continue to manage the London and Westminster Bank as prudently and successfully as he has hitherto done, and thus enforce by his example those sound commercial principles which are embodied in the Bank Charter Act of Sir Robert Peel.

AGAMEMNON THE KING.*

IT is to be regretted that English scholars so seldom employ themselves in the work of translation, which is therefore abandoned to the lowest class of labourers in the field of literature—booksellers' serfs, who have neither the knowledge nor the skill requisite for the task; and besides, being paid by the piece, and working against time, they are sure to perform it in a hasty and slovenly manner.

Our scholars may, indeed, urge in excuse that translation is a thankless task, and that the reputation to be gained by its successful performance is by no means proportioned to the time and labour which must be bestowed. They may plead that the learned reader, acquainted with the original, is prone to dwell only on the inevitable inferiority of the modern version; while the unlearned reader, not dreaming of the difficulties to be mastered, is incapable of appreciating the translator's manifestation of skill and power. Nevertheless, there are some who, having more at heart the promotion of classical learning than the advancement of their own fame, have of late years undertaken this thankless but most useful toil with the requisite qualifications, in the best spirit, and with complete success. Among the most notable instances which occur to us are *Plato's Republic*, by Mr. Davies and Mr. Vaughan; the *Phædrus*, *Protagoras*, and *Lysis*, by Mr. Wright; and Professor Blackie's *Æschylus*. Mr. Dale's *Thucydides*, and some Oxford translations of *Aristotle*, also deserve honourable mention. We expect great things from Mr. Rawlinson's long-promised version of *Herodotus*, and are glad to hear that Professor Blackie is far advanced with the *Iliad*. A thoroughly good translation is the best and completest of all commentaries, and, if properly used, may be made an excellent instrument in education. A judicious teacher will easily contrive that, in the hands of his pupils, it shall be not a help to idleness, but a stimulus to intelligent diligence.

Translation, as we have said, is no easy task, but one which requires high culture and practised skill. For, as all language is but an approximate rendering of thought, so again, any one language can but afford an approximate equivalent for the expression of another. This approximation is most nearly perfect between modern living tongues; for similarity of manners, laws, and religion, and frequency of intercourse have assimilated the vocabulary, the phraseology, and even the grammar of all. But when the comparison is made between two languages of different epochs, belonging respectively to peoples wide apart in place as well as time—between English and Greek, for example—the difficulty of finding equivalent expressions is immensely increased. It is this fact, by the way, which gives their superiority to the classical, or dead languages, over the modern living languages as instruments of mental training—a superiority tacitly felt and practically recognised all over the civilized world.

Any man who is able to feel the full power and beauty of Plato or Thucydides will appreciate the difficulty of producing a satisfactory, and the impossibility of producing a perfect, translation. For scarcely a word in either language is exactly equivalent to any word in the other—scarcely a phrase in the one finds a perfectly parallel phrase in the other. Yet in translation, it is required to give not only the sense, but also in some degree the form of the original. Thucydides must not be disguised in the facile verbiage of Robertson, nor Plato cramped and fettered in the thin meagreness of Locke. When we pass from prose to poetry, the difficulty is increased twofold by the introduction of

a new element. For in poetry the form is as essential, and as much requires to be reproduced as the thought; and a translation, to be theoretically perfect, should exhibit the matter of the original in a new language, but in the same metre. Any man who conceives the possibility of such a combination would not have demurred to Euclid had he postulated, "that a straight line may be drawn through any three given points." But *nil mortalibus arduum est*, and some have achieved marvellous *tours de force* in attempting the impossibility in question; for example, Voss, in his *Homer*, and Mr. Cayley, in his *terza rima* rendering of the *Divine Comedy*.

Of all the ancient poets—not excepting even Pindar—Æschylus is unquestionably the most difficult. He abounds in riddles—riddles which even his countrymen and contemporaries could not read. He is like a prophet "full of the god," inspired with thoughts too great for utterance. He speaks fitfully, unequally, oracularly. To borrow an image of his own, he is like the Titan imprisoned under Ætna, whose convulsive throes are manifested, now in a rain of ashes and a night of cloud, now in lightning-flashes and rivers of liquid fire. Even when we cannot understand, we wonder and believe—we feel the presence and power of a giant intellect. Three at least of his extant tragedies—the *Agamemnon*, the *Prometheus*, and the *Eumenides*—are unsurpassed for terrible strength and pathos. The world never saw their like, till, two thousand years after, it saw *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Macbeth*. Indeed there are many points of resemblance—sometimes even startling coincidences of expression—between Æschylus and Shakspeare—enough to make one believe in the metempsychosis of genius. Clytemnestra and Lady Macbeth are the creations of kindred minds.

The *Agamemnon* is the masterpiece of the Greek drama. It combines all the characteristics best calculated to produce a deep and enduring impression; viz., antique simplicity, colossal grandeur, unity of purpose, and intense, ever-growing interest. Each scene is like some huge alto-relief on the frieze of an immemorial temple. The lonely sentinel looking into the night, from the palace-roof of the Atreidæ; the simulated welcome of the false wife, whose very cunning is full of "heroic" dignity; the dark misgiving with which Agamemnon treads the purple-strewn way to the house of doom; the wailing of Cassandra, maddened with foreknowledge of fate; the agony of perplexity of the helpless aged Chorus, when they hear the groans of the dying king; and finally, the crowning moment when the palace-doors are flung open, and Clytemnestra stands with her foot on the sheeted corpse, boastful of the deed, and defiant of vengeance—all these are conceptions which, for true sublimity, have never been surpassed, except by the inspired poet-prophets of Israel.

The *Agamemnon* is as remarkable for the intricacy of its language as for the simplicity of its plot. In this case, at all events, there is no lack of translators, allured, perhaps, as much by its difficulties as its beauty. None have achieved complete success, for that, as we have shown, is impossible; but several have deserved it, and have given us an *Agamemnon* which, if not the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus, is yet very noteworthy as the *Agamemnon* of Conington, of Blackie, or of Blew. The first is the production of a scholar, the second of a poet, the third of an amateur. Mr. Blew, we should think, has not the verbal accuracy of the one Professor, nor the happy facility of the other. Dr. Blackie always elucidates as he paraphrases—Mr. Blew thinks it his bounden duty to leave Æschylus as dark as he found him. For instance, line 36—we forbear to inflict the Greek upon our printer—is translated by Blackie:—

The rest I whisper not, for on my tongue
Is laid a seal.

Blew, sternly literal, has it thus:—

And—but hush! hush! the big bull o'er my tongue
Hath gone, and trod my talk out—

which, to the unlearned reader, must seem sheer nonsense. It is one of the special difficulties which the translators of Æschylus have to combat, that he frequently descends at once from the vaguest and most sublime poetic imagery to a simile of quite Homeric familiarity; and, in the same way, the most gorgeous polysyllabic phrases alternate with words and idioms of the most homely kind. After all, perhaps Mr. Blew does his author most justice, in the eyes even of the unlearned reader, by translating literally, and referring the explanation to a note. Sometimes, however, he is so over conscientious that he obscures the sense still more, and we have more than once found it impossible to understand the English till we had referred to the Greek. With all his hermeneutic skill and care, we find his translation—to borrow a strange line of his own, (p. 73.)—"hard of understanding notwithstanding." What we most admire in him is the wealth of his poetic vocabulary, drawn apparently from the abundant and too much neglected sources of the old English drama.

Mr. Blew has very judiciously, like his predecessors, not attempted to reproduce the Greek metres either in the dialogue or chorus. The iambic trimeter has, so far as we know, been tried only by Goethe in the *Intermezzo of Helena*, and the success even of that great master of melody was not such as to encourage others to repeat the experiment. No skill in scansion enables us to comprehend the real rhythm and movement of the choral verse, widowed, as it is, of its mate, music. Even now, in these grand poems, as in mutilated marbles, something of

* *Agamemnon the King*: a Tragedy. From the Greek of Æschylus. By William Blew, M.A. London: Longmans. 1855.

their pristine grandeur and beauty is still discernible—discernible, too, as the reader will acknowledge, in Mr. Blew's paraphrase.

We select as a specimen the splendid passage, instinct with lyric passion—such as we should have found in Alceus had he been preserved to us—in which Menelaus is described as wandering restlessly through his deserted palace, gazing on the statues of his false wife:—

He comes, he stands in silence by,
Dishonoured stands—yet unrepiningly,
Looking as though he saw not, nor believing
Her lost, who thus, his widowed heart bereaving,
From his torn home dared to go.
And still for love and longing
Of her beyond the sea,
A phantom wan will seem to sway
That once dear happy home;
While of those imaged shapes divine,
Whereof so fond was he,
The grace is hateful now become;
And from those blank lack-lustre eyes
All love flows fast away.
Dreams and visions of the night,
Fraught with grief ere morning light,
Haunt his bed, and seem to bear
Fair delight, but false as fair;
For what falsier is than this—
When one dreams a dream of bliss,
But the vision unawares,
Fading through his hands and flitting,
Vanishes, and nought is there
Of the sight he seemed to see—
Gone on the wings of air
That lackey sleep.

THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY.*

THOSE persons who were present at the Chichester meeting of the Archeological Institute in 1853, will doubtless remember Dr. Bruce's vivid and attractive lecture on the famous Tapestry of Bayeux. This lecture, in a somewhat enlarged form, he has now given to the world in an elegant quarto volume. The book is enriched with a representation of the tapestry itself, reduced from the magnificent volume by Stothard, published long ago by the Society of Antiquaries. The coloured printing of this, and the whole getting up of the book, reflect the highest credit on the press of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Dr. Bruce is a careful and accurate antiquary, and a very agreeable lecturer, and he has produced both a useful and a pleasing volume. Perhaps he might with advantage, in revising his work for the press, have retrenched a few touches here and there, which were appropriate enough, and perhaps necessary, to fix the attention of a general audience during an oral delivery, but which are a little out of place in a grave historical inquiry. The style of a popular lecture and the style of a scientific book are so totally different that the one can hardly be reproduced in the form of the other without appearing, to some extent, at a disadvantage.

Dr. Bruce goes very minutely through the details of the Tapestry, examining them with a twofold view, as illustrating the manners, costume, and general archaeology of the period, and as direct historical evidence for the events of that period. He contends, as we think very convincingly, for the contemporary character of the Tapestry; but whether it was actually wrought by Queen Matilda and her ladies is a very minor point. Its early date seems sufficiently shown by three arguments. In the first place, its fulness and accuracy display a contemporary hand. When we say "accuracy," we do not mean to argue in a circle—we refer to those numerous little touches and incidents which bespeak a person fully acquainted with the events. Such little details as Harold drawing his fallen comrades from the sand in the Breton expedition, the unexplained introduction of Turolf, Wadard, and Ælfgva—personages somewhat mysterious to us—with the evident attempts to depict each individual with his distinctive features and costume, all show it to be a work addressed to persons thoroughly conversant with the whole story. Secondly, the antiquarian details are those of the actual period, and no other. Mediæval painters, sculptors, and even writers, we need not say, always represent the costume of their own period, and not of that of which they were writing. We think the fact that Wace describes the Norman horses as covered with armour, while the Tapestry represents them without, is sufficient of itself to prove the contemporaneous antiquity of the Tapestry. Thirdly, it is evidently an apologetic story on the Norman side, making out the best case for William and the worst for Harold, and yet not recklessly trifling with the facts like the later Norman writers. This places it in the early part of the reign of the Conqueror, when he was engaged in his possibly sincere, but at any rate utterly hopeless, attempt to reign as constitutional King of the English. All this is very fully, clearly, and ably worked out by our author.

The smaller details of the Tapestry certainly need an interpreter, and they have found a patient and a loving one in Dr. Bruce. We remember that, before hearing Dr. Bruce's lecture, we had fancied ourselves pretty well acquainted with this venerable document, but that, when we did hear it, we learned many

particulars for the first time. We may be sure that in this tapestry nothing was introduced without a purpose. It is certainly a contemporary record; it is probably one put forth by authority on one side. It is like a panorama of the siege of Sebastopol just now. But we may conceive that three such panoramas, one painted by order of Prince Gortschakoff, another by that of General Simpson, and the third by that of the editor of the *Times*, would not agree in every minute particular. One can fancy that the first would very prominently exhibit the Allied armies engaged in the work of destruction, and would not represent Russian soldiers in the act of stabbing the wounded. The two latter might agree to reverse this picture, but might greatly differ between themselves. The British Commander would hardly occupy exactly the same position in both, during the attack on the Redan; while one would give to a figure labelled "Russell" an importance which it would not possess in either of the others—an importance probably much more conspicuous than the modest place claimed by "Turolf" and "Wadard" in the old worsted chronicle.

Similarly, the Bayeux Tapestry gives us only one side of the story, where we should wish for two, if not three. We should like to see some tapestry wrought by Harold's mother and widow, or by the sisters of the Ætheling Edgar. The document, though, as we have said, far more candid and accurate than most documents on the same side, is still, after all, an *ex parte* statement. From this it follows—1st, that the minutest details are probably not without some bearing on the case; and 2ndly, that the statements contained in it are not to be implicitly accepted without being weighed against those on the other side. A commentator on the Tapestry is chiefly bound to show what tale its designers intended to tell. How far that tale is to be believed is no essential part of his business—he may fairly undertake it, but he may equally fairly leave it to the professed historians of the period. Dr. Bruce attempts both tasks, and in the first he succeeds well nigh to perfection; but in the second his success is only respectable. The former he does thoroughly *con amore*, with great spirit, and with great acuteness. The bearing of every detail in the tapestry, both on the general antiquities of the time, and on the story specially in hand, is shown in the fullest and most effective manner, and yet it is in no way strained or overdone. In the other aspect of the case, Dr. Bruce has been equally laborious and conscientious, and his remarks are always worthy of attention; but his faculty of historical criticism is hardly equal to his archaeological acumen.

Dr. Bruce, as the illustrator, and a most excellent illustrator, of the Tapestry, has fallen into an editor's or biographer's weakness for the subject of his own labours; and he unconsciously assumes it not merely as one of our best authorities, but as the supreme and standard authority. Unconsciously again, we think, this produces a little leaning to the Norman side. He carefully weighs all the other statements, but treats them too much as merely subsidiary to the Tapestry, and not as of equal authority with it. He is thus induced to cast aside the simple and probable account given by William of Malmesbury of Harold's unfortunate voyage to Normandy. It is certainly inconsistent with the Tapestry, but it is not inconsistent with probability; and it is the only one which can explain several detached and perplexing allusions, some of them even in the Tapestry itself. One of these is the mysterious figure labelled "Ælfgva." On this subject much has been written, most of which is palpable nonsense. Dr. Bruce, far more ingeniously, supposes it to be a sort of episode. Harold, he says, is represented as sending a message to his betrothed wife in England, at the very moment when he is pledging himself to Duke William's daughter in Normandy. The objections to this are—1st, that Harold's wife was not named Ælfgva, but Ealdgyth; 2nd, that the Ælfgva of the Tapestry is very plainly represented as not being in England, but in Normandy. At the meeting of the Institute following the reading of Dr. Bruce's paper, namely at Cambridge in 1854, Mr. Freeman went very elaborately through the matter, and came to these conclusions—1st, that Harold, as stated by Malmesbury, was driven on the coast of Ponthieu by an accidental storm, when on a yachting expedition; 2nd, that he was accompanied by his brother Wulfnoth, his sister Ælfgva, and his nephew Haco; 3rd, that he was entrapped by William into swearing allegiance to him, and left Wulfnoth as a hostage, and engaged to marry Ælfgva to a Norman.

The tale that he was sent to announce to William the bequest of Edward in his favour, grew out of Harold's compulsory oath. The other tale, that he went to recover Wulfnoth and Haco (said to have been given as hostages after Godwin's return), grew out of the fact that he left Wulfnoth as a hostage for his faith to William. That Harold had a sister Ælfgva appears by *Domesday*. He promised to give a sister of his to a Norman; and an Ælfgva was in William's court. The natural inference is, that the Ælfgva of the Tapestry is Harold's sister, and that she had accompanied her brother. This version of the tale rests upon no direct statement, but upon a mass of allusions and circumstances in various statements, which can be satisfactorily explained in no other way. But Dr. Bruce, with his notion of the paramount authority of the Tapestry, could not possibly arrive at it. He is obliged to believe that Harold was sent into Normandy with a formal mission from Edward, because such is most incontestably the version of the tale which the Tapestry records.

Our author then proceeds to comment, most carefully and

* *The Bayeux Tapestry elucidated.* By Rev. John Collingwood Bruce, M.D., &c. London: S. R. Smith.

ingeniously, on all the circumstances of the visit—the oath, the war in Brittany, the election of Harold, the invasion, the battle—as recorded in the Tapestry. On the oath of Harold he makes the following just remarks:—

But after all, this oath of Harold's was not, in the estimation of the men of that day, the serious thing that has been represented. Men whom an oath taken in the name and in the presence of the living God could not bind, were not to be restrained by any moral influence. A little ingenuity only was requisite to release a man from an oath taken upon the relics. In the *Roman de Rose* we have a case in point. At Val de Dunes the rebel lords of Normandy appeared in arms against the duke. Before the opposing hosts joined, Raoul Töpan, who was arrayed against William, was seen to act with hesitancy. His men besought him not to make war upon his lawful lord, whatever he did, reminding him that the man who would fight against his lord had no fief or barony. Raoul could understand this argument, but what was he to do? he "had pledged himself, and sworn upon the saints at Bayeux, to smite William wherever he should find him." The difficulty was however got over. Ordering his men to rest where they were, he came spurring over the plain, struck his lord with his glove, and said laughingly to him, "What I have sworn to do that I perform; I had sworn to smite you as soon as I should find you; and as I would not perjure myself, I have now struck you to acquit myself of my oath, and henceforth I will do you no farther wrong or felony." Then the duke said, "Thanks be to thee!" and Raoul thereupon went on his way back to his men. Success attended the side which Raoul thus espoused, and we hear nothing of his perjury. Harold fell on the hard-fought field of Hastings, and Heaven and earth resounded with cries of horror at the foul sin. Had he won, a new abbey, or the re-imposition of Peter's Pence, would have cleared off the score. (p. 70-1.)

Dr. Bruce's comments on the election and coronation of Harold, as depicted in the Tapestry, are extremely good. He very lucidly explains the complicated right by which an old English monarch claimed his crown—the mixture of family claims, bequest, and election. It is somewhat odd, therefore, that, in an earlier part of his work he should several times speak of the Ætheling Edgar as the "direct heir" of Edward the Confessor. In those days, as Dr. Bruce himself shows, no one could be "heir" to the crown in the modern sense of one having an absolute right, irrespective of election. And more—according to our present law of succession, Edgar was not the heir of Edward, but Edward was the next male heir of Edgar. Edgar was the grandson of Edward's elder brother. Consequently one writer, Mr. Poole, supposing the law of hereditary succession to be of eternal obligation, boldly stigmatises Edward the Confessor as being, what under the Act of Settlement he certainly would be, a usurper of the rights of his nephew.

The Bayeux Tapestry, it will be remembered, is the only Norman account which fully and fairly admits the facts of Harold's election and consecration. It only differs from the English version in describing him as crowned by Stigand, and not by Ealdred of York, as the English authorities state, with one single unimportant exception. The animus is plain—Stigand was held to be an uncanonical Archbishop, and consequently Harold's consecration was invalid. But how do we account for the direct contradiction as to the fact? If there is no direct falsification on either side, we could fancy the Normans taking for granted that he was consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, as the usual officiator on such occasions. Sir E. B. Lytton hardly escapes the difficulty by observing that both Archbishops would assist in the ceremony. Probably they would; but one only would be the actual celebrant, on whose authority the validity of the rite would depend. Several bishops took part in the coronation of her present Majesty; but no one would say that she was crowned by any one but Archbishop Howley.

On the finding and burial of Harold's body, Dr. Bruce says:

The account given by Ordericus, of the disposal of Harold's body, is the following: "Harold could not be discovered by his features, but was recognised by other tokens; and his corpse, being borne to the Duke's camp, was, by order of his conqueror, delivered to William Mallett, for interment near the seashore, which had long been guarded by his arms." William of Poitiers gives a similar statement. Later writers say that his body was interred with royal honours in Waltham Abbey. This tradition, which probably had its origin in the wish of the monks to attract visitors to the shrine at Waltham, cannot be entertained, in opposition to the express statements of contemporaries. Some venture, too, to assert that, though severely wounded at Hastings, he was not killed; and that, on escaping from the field, he first fled to the Continent, and afterwards led the life of a recluse at Chester. This is a statement which may be at once rejected.

The difficulty in discovering the body, to which Ordericus refers was, it is generally believed, overcome by Edith, surnamed from her beauty, the Fair. The keen eye of affection discerned his mangled form amidst heaps of dead, which appeared to common observers an undistinguishable mass. What will not woman's love accomplish? Many writers have done great dishonour to this lady, by stating that she was the mistress of Harold. Sir Henry Ellis, in his *Introduction to Domesday Book*, has proved that she was his queen; "Aldith, Algyva, or Eddeva," being names which are all synonymous. Unhappy Elgyva, how different her feelings now from what they were when the clerk announced to her, in his own familiar way, the rescue of Harold from the capture of Guy! (p. 151-2.)

On this we would remark that, if Dr. Bruce rejects the burial of Harold at Waltham, he should also reject the discovery of his body by Eadgyth. Both come from the same source—the local legends of Waltham, which are published in *Michel's Chroniques Anglo-Normandes*. To these we attach very little value on any point; but surely they are of more value for the fact of the burial than for the other romantic circumstance.

Again, Dr. Bruce has fallen into the same curious error as Mr. Thorpe, in his* translation of *Lappenberg*, about the identifi-

* It is discreditable to the English public that this noble work, incomparably the best history of England in early times, not only remains in a first edition, but has to be sold at a reduced price, while the learned editor is driven to publish the following volumes by subscription. We shall be fallen low indeed if Mr. Thorpe cannot muster a list of subscribers.

cation of Eadgyth of the Swan's Neck with Harold's Queen Ealdgyth. Sir Henry Ellis says nothing of the kind. He identifies Queen Ealdgyth with the *Eddeva pulcra of Domesday*—he does not identify *Eddeva pulcra* with Eadgyth of the Swan's Neck, but quite the contrary. If Eadgyth *Swanneshals* was a real person at all, she was certainly Harold's mistress, as she is described in the Waltham legends. Queen Ealdgyth, moreover, was not there. Her brothers, according to Florence, removed with her to Chester so soon after, that her presence at Senlac is most probable.

These little points show, we think, that Dr. Bruce is not quite so strong in weighing general evidence as in illustrating his own particular authority. But in this last respect his book could not be improved, and even in the other, it is far from being without value.

LABOULAYE'S CONTEMPORARY STUDIES.*

UNDER the title of *Etudes Contemporaines sur l'Allemagne et les pays slaves*, M. Laboulaye has collected into one volume a series of essays which originally appeared in the columns of the *Débats*. They embrace a considerable variety of subjects,—the partition of Poland, the quarrels of Georgei and Kossuth, the history of Servia and Albania, and notices of the lives and writings of Savigny, Radowitz, and Gervinus. But the author tells us that a unity is imparted to this miscellaneous group, inasmuch as every subject is looked at from the same point of view. M. Laboulaye is, as most of our readers know, an eminent jurist, and he belongs to what, among jurists, is termed the Historical school. The adherents of this party profess to seek wisdom in an attentive study of the past, and to inquire rather what institutions have been than what they might be, or what there is of a permanent and universal character underlying all human laws and societies. There was a time when to insist on the historical method had a real value, because there was something definite to which it was opposed. This was the doctrine of the Philosophical school, which regarded history as either an incomplete exposition of, or an aberration from, those precepts which may be infallibly and fully deduced from the analysis of human reason, and from an investigation of those primary conditions to which any society of men must be subjected. But it seems to us that the time is past when either school can be said to occupy a distinct field. Undoubtedly, many of the most brilliant and sterling works which this century has produced have owed their origin to that spirit of anxious and laborious inquiry into the past, which has made the very notion of history something different from that which prevailed previously, and has enabled us to re-write the annals of the Middle Ages, of Rome, and of Egypt. Undoubtedly, also, the Philosophical school was the parent of much vague and useless discussion. It was only valuable under the guidance of its most eminent members, and even the greatest of them really wrote from the prompting of those rapid generalisations which are formed, however indirectly, from experience. But the days of the distinction between the two schools are gone. The Historical school perceives that it must philosophise—the Philosophical, that it must know accurately the facts which furnish philosophy with material. There is accordingly something pedantic in M. Laboulaye's complacent assertion that he views modern politics by the light of the Historical school. He possesses, however, a very valuable amount of common sense, and therefore he never pushes his tenets to their extreme point. His two great heroes, Savigny and Radowitz, both lived to modify very considerably their estimation of an exclusive study of the past. This change he records with apparent approbation, but he omits to notice that to approve it is virtually to abandon all distinction between the school he favours and the school he opposes. Like most Frenchmen, he cannot be happy without his formula. Early in life he decided for the Historical school, and by the help of this patent lantern he made up his mind to poke about the world. It has guided him to the acquisition of much valuable matter, which the skill of a practised writer enables him to arrange and exhibit with effect; but his lantern has a dark side, and his essays are wanting in that philosophical grasp which places a writer above his subject.

The topics discussed are so various, that we must confine ourselves at present to those which bear immediately on Germany. We have first a *Life of Savigny*, with whom the author is personally acquainted, and whose disciple he, or any man, may be proud to be. Some of our readers may like to know that Savigny was born at Frankfort on the 21st of February, 1779. He was educated by his mother, an ardent Calvinist, and had the misfortune to lose her when he was only twelve, his father having died the year before. At the early age of sixteen, he entered the University of Marbourg, and there was stimulated to devote himself to the study of jurisprudence by the advice and encouragement of the eminent jurist, Weis. At twenty-three he published his *Essay on Possession*, one of the most remarkable compositions, considering to the age of the writer, which the world has ever seen. Soon afterwards he married Mlle. de Brentano, the sister of Clement Brentano and of Goethe's Bettina. In 1810, he was offered, by Wilhelm von Humboldt, a chair in the new University of Berlin, which he accepted; and he has continued

* *Etudes Contemporaines sur l'Allemagne et les pays slaves*. Par Edouard Laboulaye. Paris. 1856.

for forty years to contribute, by the eminence of his acquirements and the zeal of his teaching, a large share to the renown which that University has obtained. After the success of the War of Independence, Germany was powerfully impelled by the remembrance and the hopes of the struggle to the construction of a common Empire, which should hold together, if it could not supersede, the petty States whose existence made a great people so weak. Thibaut proposed the formation of a common code, in order to pave the way for a political union, and a great amount of popular sympathy was enlisted in behalf of the project. But Savigny came forward as an opponent. He urged that the Germans of that day were not sufficiently versed in the history of Roman and customary law to decide what should be retained and what rejected in forming a new code. His opinion prevailed, as indeed any opinion adverse to national unity and an enlarged system of government is tolerably sure to do in Germany; and perhaps—though to make any assertion about Germany is always dangerous—it was fortunate that no code was attempted. There was then a real distinction between historical and philosophical jurists, and we must say, looking back from a time when the distinction is past, that the historical party had the best of it. A deep and accurate knowledge of facts was necessary for any successful application of philosophical principles, and the facts necessary to form the basis of a code were not sufficiently known.

When the contest with Thibaut was finished, Savigny occupied himself in putting the last touches to a work suggested to him by Weis twenty years before—the history of the Glossators. This work, which is known as the *History of Roman Law in the Middle Ages*, is a prodigy of learning, but it is too deficient in general scope and interest to be more than a book of reference for the student. In 1825, an nervous disorder obliged him to seek for four years' rest and change in Italy. On his return to Berlin, he was induced to take a more active part in the Council of State, to which he had belonged since 1819. The experience of great affairs, and the perception of the practical exigencies of the State, produced a remarkable change in his juridical writings. He had previously expressed a great contempt for the power of the legislator, as laws grew, and could not be made. But a nearer acquaintance with government made him wish to govern. He saw that it was possible to do something more than to collect and examine facts, and that the great task of the jurist was to reconcile theory and practice. Accordingly, he devoted himself to the composition of his greatest work, the "System of Modern Roman Law," the object of which is to examine what, in German institutions borrowed from the Roman law, is really valuable. Under the reign of the present King, Savigny was for a short time in the Ministry, and signalized his tenure of office by elaborating the plan of a law for regulating and restraining divorces. Since the Revolution of 1848, he has retired into private life, and has occupied a serene and healthy old age by writing two volumes on "Obligations," continuing his "System," and collecting his minor works. He is undoubtedly one of the greatest writers of Germany—not possessed so much of originality of mind as of that perception of truth which in some men supplies the place of originality, and rivals it in its effects on the minds of others. If we could gather into one focus all the influence which Savigny has exerted on European thought, we should think it scarcely possible to place him too high.

The name of von Radowitz is familiar to all who have followed the history of Prussia during the reign of the present King. He was born in Blankenburg, in 1797. His father was a rigid Catholic, and the son was conspicuous for the tenacity with which he adhered to his faith while the Minister of a Protestant King. He entered the military service of France, and was present at the battle of Leipzig; but, on the dissolution of the kingdom of Westphalia, he became once more a German, and earned such distinction in 1814 that he was made, at eighteen, the military preceptor of the hereditary Prince of Hesse-Cassel. He continued in that small Electorate for six years, and at last left on his espousing the side of the Electress in a quarrel arising from the conduct of the Elector's mistresses. The Electress was sister of the King of Prussia, and her partisan was sure of a ready welcome at Berlin. There he was appointed military preceptor of Prince Albert, and had an opportunity of forming a very intimate acquaintance with the present King. The characteristic bent of his mind was towards the history, the thoughts, and the actions of the middle ages; and it was this devotion to the past which has secured him the admiration of our historical jurist. On the accession of Frederic William IV., Radowitz used his great influence to impel the King towards effecting two great objects—the establishment of constitutional government, and the formation of Germany into one great State. He laboured in vain, or at any rate his labours are still waiting for their fruits. The King, in 1847, promulgated the constitution which the shock of 1848 rendered inoperative, and Radowitz himself confessed that too much time had been suffered to elapse, and that the public were prepared, by the vexation of delay, to receive with distrust whatever the King proposed. The Parliament of Frankfort, however, seemed to offer a compensation for the disappointments which, in Prussia, the Revolution entailed. Radowitz was the leading spirit of the Parliament, but it naturally distrusted a man who was known to be a zealous Catholic, and an admirer of the middle ages, and who was believed to have been accessory to the long refusal which the King of Prussia had given to the wishes of his

subjects. Partly from the contemplation of current events, partly from reflection after his failure, he came to alter his views very considerably, and to acquiesce sincerely in the conviction that past times can never be restored. But his opponents at Frankfort could not know the changes at work in his mind, and jealousy and personal dislike led them to reject the many excellent plans he proposed, both to make the Parliament secure and to make it effective. The bubble burst, and with it perished, at any rate for many years, the hope of German union. Radowitz devoted the leisure which the failure of his political career afforded him, to writing political and religious treatises, and composing a history of the reign of Frederic William IV. He died about two years ago, and in spite of all that can be said against him, his loss was one of the greatest that Prussia could have sustained. It was his misfortune that he had to serve a master whose mind too closely resembled his own. Both have contributed largely to that pavement which is constructed of good intentions; but neither could help the other to seize the tide at its flood, and to conquer fortune.

We need not notice at any length the essay on Gervinus. It is short and slight, and is principally composed of speculations on the political prospects of Germany. The leading result of M. Laboulaye's reflections is, that as a rule of practical conduct, Germany—and by Germany is meant Prussia—ought to follow the English method of effecting only one reform at a time, instead of attempting a general recast of the government. As a part of his experience in men and books, he tells us that Germans now look to America, not England, as their model—that they are weary of the wretched parodies of constitutional government which have been palmed off on them, and have begun to dream of a federal republic. Time alone can show whether their dream will pass through the gate of ivory or of horn.

MISTAKES OF DAILY OCCURRENCE IN SPEAKING AND WRITING.*

THE author of this interesting and useful little work informs us that it contains a sketch of "some of the inaccuracies that are daily perpetrated even in the very highest classes of society." The cover of the copy in our possession intimates further, that the issue has reached "the thirteenth thousand, enlarged." Thirteen thousand is a full fifth of the circulation of the "leading journal;" and it follows, therefore, that the corrector of the mistakes of the very highest classes enjoys a fifth part of absolute infallibility. Between the authority of the book and the position of the persons for whose advantage it is intended, we are surprised that it has not yet attracted the notice of the critics. We, for our part, shall make no apology for an attempt to illustrate its value by a few quotations. Its principal defect consists in the absence of an index; and we accordingly think it desirable to allot the suggestions we borrow from it to the individuals or classes who are most likely to profit by them:—

Common mistake of GENTLEMEN desirous of establishing a reputation for extensive reading.—"Gibbon wrote the 'Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire;' pronounce *Rise* so as to rhyme with *price*."

Common mistake of the Administrative Reform Association.—"The business would suit any one who enjoys bad health; say, any one in a delicate state of health."

Common mistake of Country Gentlemen.—"Beware of pronouncing London, as many country persons do, *Lunnun*."

Common mistake of ditto when eulogizing Mr. Disraeli at the expense of Sir E. B. Lytton.—"He speaks extempore; pronounce extempore in four syllables, and never in three, making *poet* to rhyme with *soe*."

Common mistake of Mr. Disraeli when explaining his conduct on the War.—"I own that I did not come out soon enough; but because *why*? leave out *because*."

Miscellaneous mistakes of Ditto.—"I always act agreeable to my promise; say *agreeably*."—"Allow me to suggest; pronounce *sug* so as to rhyme with *mug*, and *gest* like *jest*; never like *suggest*."

Mistakes of Metropolitan Members when speaking of the State of the Army in 1855.—"Pronounce *January* as it is written, and not *Jennecery*, and beware of leaving out the *u* in February, or of calling the word *Febbevery*."

Mistakes very common among eminent Whigs.—"The duke (viz. of Bedford) discharged his duty; sound the *u* in duke and duty like the word *you*, and carefully avoid saying *dooke* and *dooty*."

Common mistakes of Gentlemen in the Society of Ladies.—"In conversing with an unmarried lady, never say 'Yes, miss—No, miss,' but 'Yes, madam—No, madam.'"

Ditto of Gentlemen in the Society of Gentlemen.—"How's yourself this morning?" Say "How are you?"

Common mistake of Military Men.—"To Field-marshal his Grace the Duke of Wellington." It should be "Field Marshal."

Commentary of the Author on the above common mistake.—"The late Duke of Wellington received a letter from an officer in the army, addressed as above; and so disgusted was his Grace with this most shameful display of ignorance, that, with his usual tact, energy, and good sense, he at once determined that all candidates for commissions in the army should in future be subjected to a preliminary examination—a wise and judicious measure, which has been well carried out, and has been found to work well."

GREEK FAIRY TALES.†

READING one of Mr. Kingsley's books is something like shaking hands with one of those old-fashioned hosts whose grasp almost wrings the blood from your finger-ends. You may perhaps wince under the welcome, but you are warned

* *Mistakes of Daily Occurrence in Speaking and Writing.* London: John F. Shaw.

† *The Heroes; or, Greek Fairy Tales for my Children.* By the Rev. C. Kingsley. With eight illustrations by the Author. Cambridge: Macmillan and Co., 1856.

and strengthened by its heartiness and honesty. If you would try a fall with him, like one of the heroes whose deeds are recounted in these *Fairy Tales* of the twilight age of Greece, you will be wise to summon all your prowess, for shrewd will be the wrestler, whichever may win the day. Mr. Kingsley, at least, is not one to write down to the supposed low level of a child's mind. *Maxima debetur puero reverentia* is true no less of the understanding than of the heart. Children shall be our judges. They like most, and turn to best account, those books of their own library which are fullest of interest for the older folks about them; and perhaps no better proof can ever be given of the real worth of such a work than that it is a favourite alike with the growing and the grown. One risk there certainly is—that papa and mamma, and elder brothers and sisters, may rob the little ones of their fair share of the reading. But then the book may be read aloud.

And what tales to read aloud are these of Mr. Kingsley's! Rarely have these heroes of Greek tradition been celebrated in a bolder or more stirring strain. The spirit and the faith of the true *raconteur*—our language wants the word in its better sense—are felt in every line. But Mr. Kingsley should not have spoken of his work as a *jeu d'esprit*, when it is in fact a *tour de force*. Nor need he have cautioned his young readers that the stories are not all true, nor half of them. Nor, again, need he have indicated the real or probable geography of the good ship *Argo's* voyage. Nor, finally, are we sure that the passing references to the present time—to the Arctic discoverers and the war in the Crimea—are here in their right place. They break the charm of the enchanted world, and bring us down from the dream-land, where nothing is improbable, to the waking life of business, where scarcely anything is probable. We should have small thanks for the antiquary who fixed the site of Camelot or Caerleon, and so robbed the *Mort d'Arthur* of its fictitious reality.

We care not ourselves, nor should we wish our boy, to sever false and true, as we follow Perseus from the sunny hills of Greece, over the Thracian mountains, past many a barbarous tribe, and on—

Through the moors and fens, day and night, towards the bleak north-west, turning neither to the right hand nor the left, till he came to the Unshapen Land, and the place which has no name. . . . There at last he found the three Grey Sisters, by the shore of the freezing sea, nodding upon a white log of drift-wood, beneath the cold white winter moon; and they chanted a low song together, "Why the old times were better than the new."

There was no living thing around them, not a fly, not a moss upon the rocks. Neither seal nor sea-gull dare come near, lest the ice should clutch them in its claws. The surge broke up in foam, but it fell again in flakes of snow, and it frosted the hair of the three Grey Sisters, and the bones in the ice-cliff above their heads. They passed the eye from one to the other, but for all that they could not see; and they passed the tooth from one to the other, but for all that they could not eat; and they sat in the full glare of the moon, but they were none the warmer for her beams. And Perseus pitied the three Grey Sisters, but they did not pity themselves.

Is it thought that this description is conceived in too wild and weird a vein for the youthful imagination? The question may admit of discussion, and there are several passages in the volume—such, for instance, as, in this tale, the rush of the Gorgons on the track of the slayer of Medusa, with "the wind rattling hoarse in their wings"—which would raise it much more forcibly. But the grown-up reader must not endow the child with his own susceptibilities. Mr. Kingsley's present stories abound with pictures of which the grace and beauty contrast with these grim adventures. Such is the visit of Perseus to the Hesperides, where they sing around the golden fruit, and procure him the Hat of Darkness with which to approach the Gorgons unseen. Such, again, is the account of the nurture of Jason and his brother Argonauts in the Centaur's cave, high upon "Pelion the ancient mountain, whose brows are white with snow." Such is the narrative of the *Argo's* sailing by Seylla, when *Thetis* and all her nymphs rise and play around the ship, and "pass her on from hand to hand, and toss her through the billows, as maidens toss the ball," striking back the sea-hag's heads with a touch of their gentle hands. Such, too, is the tale of the early days of Theseus, and his yearly efforts to raise the fated stone.

The likenesses existing between these old classical legends and the corresponding traditions of other countries, strike the reader with new force when he sees the former presented, as here by Mr. Kingsley, from a Northern rather than a Grecian point of view. Southey curiously attributed this almost universal resemblance to the dispersion of the Jews. Be that as it may, by arranging these stories in something of a Scandinavian garb, the present author seems to make it more easy for the descendants of the old Vikings to understand another heroic age. If this result were achieved at any cost of truth—if the insight thus obtained were at variance with the meaning of the tales as understood by the Greeks themselves—Mr. Kingsley, we need hardly say, would have missed his mark. But this does not seem to us to be the case. Even the pruning and suppression requisite to make almost all old traditions, whether of Hellas or of any other clime, fit for young readers, do not appear to have obscured the distinguishing characteristics of the stories. They are still as indisputably and peculiarly Greek as the Round Table romances are Norman, or the legends lately recounted in metre by Mr. Longfellow, Indian. We may add that, in one respect, they are especially adapted to Mr. Kingsley's genius. They are emphatically stories of courage, address, and

strength; and every reader of the author knows the charm which those qualities possess in his eyes. They also, as we have slightly indicated, offer ample opportunities for the rich and sounding diction of which he is master, and which he has rarely employed in prose with more effect than here. We say "in prose," but little change would be needed to throw large portions of these tales into a poetical form. The language continually becomes rhythmical. We open at random, and read:—

They went in and saw him sitting
Like Poseidon on his throne;
With his golden sceptre by him,
In garments stiff with gold;
And in his hand a sculptured goblet,
As he pledged the merchant kings;
And beside him stood *Arete*,
His wise and lovely queen,
And leaned against a pillar,
As she spun her golden thread.

Mr. Kingsley has opened a wide field in this volume, and one which expands far beyond the limits of merely Greek mythology; but so long as it finds workers of his own spirit, there need be no fear that the public will grow weary. For us, at all events, his present stories have invested the well-known words of Max Piccolomini with a fuller meaning and power than we ever felt in them before.

A MESMERIC QUACK.*

OUR second illustration of "Catchpenny Science" is one calling for more reprobation than the first. Dr. Lindley Kemp only touched our pockets—Mr. Neilson threatens our health. The ignorance which runs through the *Phasis of Matter* is harmless—the ignorance which Mr. Neilson preaches is specious and dangerous. As we intend to test this gentleman's pretensions pretty vigorously, it is necessary that at the outset we isolate him from the many honourable, and the few eminent, men who believe in Mesmerism and its curative powers. We call Mr. Neilson a Mesmeric Quack, because he has all the qualities of a quack; but we no more mean to apply the same term to all mesmerists than those who speak of a medical quack mean to insult the medical profession.

Mr. Neilson begins with chapters of citations tending to discredit medicine. He quotes the confessions of eminent practitioners and the sarcasms of others, to show that the theory and practice of medicine are extremely uncertain, mere gropings in the dark, liable to very gross errors, and seldom to be relied on with the confidence due to exact science. He also shows, in some telling citations, how obstinately the profession has opposed all novelties, and how difficult it has been to get even valuable discoveries brought into general use. As a preliminary to an exposition of the present state of medicine, or even as an excuse for the trial of a new curative agent, by an instructed physician, these chapters would be both effective and justifiable. But Mr. Neilson is so deplorably ignorant of physiology and pathology that he does not see how wiser men have necessarily been sceptical; and he is so far removed from the proper standing-point that he cannot appreciate the honourable candour which avows uncertainty in the presence of difficulties so great. He has no uncertainty—he has the perfect confidence of ignorance. He avows no hesitation, for he has to secure patients, and doubt might scare them.

Nothing can be simpler than his system. He says, "The cause of disease is one—disturbance of the brain-force; and the cure of the disease is one—readjustment of the brain-force." Such elementary ignorance will make every instructed reader stare; but the public is easily imposed on by simple formulas, and this is simple enough in all conscience. "The mesmeric process cures all diseases by duly stimulating the brain-force and regulating the nerval circulation—that is to say, by supplying the organism with motive power to perform its proper actions. Nothing can be simpler. A poison is taken up into the circulating current, and we call that disease; but the real cause is 'disturbance of the brain-force,' whatever that may be; and Mr. Neilson will send a flow of brain-force to the rescue, which shall at once neutralize the poison and restore health. You ask, perhaps, how the brain-force can act thus chemically on a poison, and Mr. Neilson will be ready with an answer, no doubt, for he assures us that 'any fluid or solid becomes imbued with brain-force when brought in contact with the living organism.' (p. 81.) Carbonate of lime, phosphates, prussic acid, arsenic—any solid—need only come in contact with the organism, and at once the brain-force acts upon it, 'imbues it.' The sole difficulty is to cause this all-imbuing agent to flow in sufficient quantities, and in the right direction. You understand?"

"The healthy play of the organic functions depends on the appropriate nerves being duly supplied with that force which proceeds from the action of the brain." (p. 79.) If Mr. Neilson knew his A B C of physiology, he would know that the brain and nerves themselves are dependent on the organic functions; he would know, moreover, that organic functions go on with perfect regularity in animals which have no nerves; and a little more instruction would teach him that even animals endowed with

* Mesmerism in its Relation to Health and Disease, and the present state of Medicine. By William Neilson, Esq. Edinburgh: Shepherd and Elliot.